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**Creating a marketing plan for Specsavers Opticians
Seinäjoki**

Opinnäytetyö

Syksy 2010

Liiketalouden, yrittäjyyden ja ravitsemisalan yksikkö

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THESIS ABSTRACT

Faculty: Seinäjoki Business School

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The purpose of this final thesis was to create a marketing plan for Specsavers Opticians Seinäjoki. The target company produces eye care services, sells eyeglasses, sunglasses, contact lenses, as well as all their care and maintenance-related goods worldwide. I will concentrate on Specsavers Opticians Seinäjoki operations.

The thesis is divided into three distinct parts. First, I explored the Specsavers chain and its operating principles. The aim was to present a wide range of business activities, values, customer base, resources and the status of their current marketing activities.

The second part consists of analyzing different elements in the marketing environment that affect the Specsavers' marketing. This section includes a description of the activities, aspects, theories and conclusions. In accordance with the objectives of Specsavers, the marketing environment was explored regionally, but keeping in mind their international marketing concept. This section includes the marketing plan itself.

The last section contains ideas for developing the company. In this section, the theoretical and practical point of view was included all the time. There were several factors to be taken into account when going through the material: Specsavers objectives, factors in the target country, values and guidelines to create a good communication message.

The objective of this thesis is to help Specsavers Opticians Seinäjoki to find and focus on their two main target segments as well as making and creating new successful campaigns locally to support the chains marketing. This work opened many new aspects to be explored and the potential market to be found and how to approach the potential customers even better than before.

Keywords: eye care service, eyeglasses, contact lenses, marketing communication, entrepreneurship, marketing plan

SEINÄJOEN AMMATTIKORKEAKOULU

OPINNÄYTETYÖN TIIVISTELMÄ

Koulutusyksikkö: Liiketalouden, yrittäjyyden ja ravitsemisalan yksikkö

Koulutusohjelma: Degree Programme in International Business

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Opinnäytetyön tarkoituksena oli markkinointisuunnitelman tekeminen Specsavers Optikko Seinäjoelle. Kohdeyritys tuottaa näönhuolto palveluita, myy silmälaseja, aurinkolaseja, piilolinsskejä, sekä kaikkea niiden hoitoon ja huoltoon liittyvää tavaraa maailman laajuisesti. Työssäni keskityn Specsavers Optikko Seinäjoen liikeseen.

Opinnäytetyö jakautuu kolmeen eri osaan. Ensiksi tutkin Specsavers ketjua ja sen toimintaperiaatteita. Tavoitteena oli esitellä monipuolisesti yrityksen toiminta, arvot, asiakaskunta, resurssit, sekä heidän markkinointinsa nykytila.

Tämän jälkeen tutkin markkinointiin liittyviä tekijöitä, joita hyödynnettiin markkinointisuunnitelmaa tehtäessä. Tämä osio sisältää tärkeitä markkinoinnillisia näkökulmia, teorioita, sekä johtopäätöksiä. Specsaverssin tavoitteiden mukaisesti markkinaympäristöä tutkittiin alueellisesti, mutta kansainvälistä konseptia noudattaen. Tämä osio sisältää myös itse markkinointi suunnitelman.

Viimeinen osio sisältää kehitys ideoita yritykselle. Tässä osiossa teoria ja käytännön näkökulma olivat mukana koko ajan. Markkinointisuunnitelmaa ja kehitys ideoita työstettäessä otin huomioon Specsaverssin arvot, tavoitteet, sekä kohdemaan markkinatekijät ja toimivan viestinnän toteutusperiaatteet.

Tämän työn tavoite on auttaa Specsavers Optikko Seinäjoen liikettä löytämään heidän tärkeimmät segmenttinsä ja keskittymään niihin ja luomaan uusia menestyksekkäitä markkinointi kampanjoita paikallisesti tukemaan ketjun valtakunnallista markkinointia. Mielestäni tämä työ avasi monia uusia näkökulmia tutkia ja nähdä potentiaaliset markkinat ja miten tulisi saavuttaa potentiaaliset asiakkaat paremmin kuin ennen.

Avainsanat: Näönhuoltopalvelu, silmälasit, piilolinssit, markkinointiviestintä, yrittäjyys, markkinointisuunnitelma

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1 INTRODUCTION

The title for the final thesis is Creating a marketing plan for the company Specsavers Seinäjoki for the Southern Ostrobothnias local market. There are several reasons for me to choose Specsavers as my thesis' subject company and Finland as my target country.

First of all, I find Specsavers as an interesting case company. Specsavers is British, the biggest privately owned optical industry group in the world and world's 3rd biggest optical chain, which expanded their operation to Finnish market in 2007. It turned the whole optical industry market and eyewear market upside down as fast as it established their two first stores. Secondly, I have been working for Specsavers Seinäjoki since beginning of 2010. My employers are one of those major influencers in Specsavers Finland's marketing team. Strength for this final work is my close interaction with the management of the company. It was quite easy and natural for me to choose the topic.

1.1 Thesis objectives and restrictions

There are two main objectives in this final thesis. The first goal is to explore company's current state-and operating environment analysis also describe the biggest competitors in Finnish market from Specsavers point of view; go through the main characteristics of the company including the core values, organizational structure and product range. The second objective is to create a marketing plan for the Specsavers Seinäjoki and Kauhava from the point of view of the entrepreneurs.

The same entrepreneurs own Specsavers Seinäjoki and Kauhava. This marketing plan is meant to open the marketing operations and concept of marketing in Finland and Southern Ostrobothnia for the company; what kind of marketing tools, how and what the company could use and which segments to focus on.

When it comes to creating marketing plan for this company, one has to be aware of the whole chains concept; every Specsavers stores in the world are operating under the same international concept.

1.2 Structure of the final thesis

This marketing plan will be implemented for the Specsavers Seinäjoki 2011-2012. The main point of this formula is to get customer satisfaction at the highest level it could be. This is the base for building long-term customer relationships, profitable and successful business. The first phase of this process is to understand customer needs and wants and the marketplace in which they operate. Secondly comes customer focused marketing strategy, which is including market segmentation, differentiation, positioning and products. According to this marketing process the next phase is to create an integrated marketing program that delivers superior value for customers and profit for the company. It actually signifies institutionalizing the controllable elements (marketing-mix) product, price, place and promotion, actively in the target market. By following this process a stable foundation for long-term customer relationships can be built, figure 1. (Kotler 2008, 5)



Figure 1: A simple model of the marketing process

The final thesis is divided into three main parts. First of all I am going to present Specsavers' business globally and then I will concentrate exploring Finnish market, which is an international market for British Specsavers chain, and the final part of the thesis contains creating marketing plan process. In the marketing plan I will focus on Specsavers Opticians Seinäjokis two main marketing segments.

The goal of the first section is to understand the case company Specsavers, their products, pricing methods and their customers. This case will begin by presenting Specsavers' history globally then in Finland. I will continue with Specsavers' business idea, resources, and core values. Then I will go on by introducing Specsavers product-and service range and also place in the market, followed by information about their biggest competitors in Finnish market. Next I go on with the customer segmentation by specifying the target groups and their needs, but I will concentrate on the main two target groups. Finally comes the product differentiation and positioning with suggestions to each target group and the last of this section I will explore the company and its business through SWOT-analysis to point out their future direction in.

In the second part, I will explore Finnish market as an international market for the company Specsavers, how was the market before they made their entrance to Finland and how has it been after that. I will also go through the pricing system and the competitors reactions after the Specsavers' revolutionary entering to the market. I present some facts and figures about International marketing task in the following chapter (1.3.)

The final part of my thesis consists of marketing plan for Specsavers Seinäjoki. At first, I will go through the basic elements of these two companies, current state-and operating analysis and then the goals locally. This company has clear target in the future: to become a market leader locally and of course in whole domestic market. I will explore how to create clear way to attract new customers in this area and of course how to keep old customers satisfied and for example aware of campaigns and so on to make them come and buy again.

1.3 The international marketing task

The second section of the final thesis includes the international marketing task. It presents different elements in both domestic and foreign environment, effecting on marketing in the target country.

The International Marketing Task

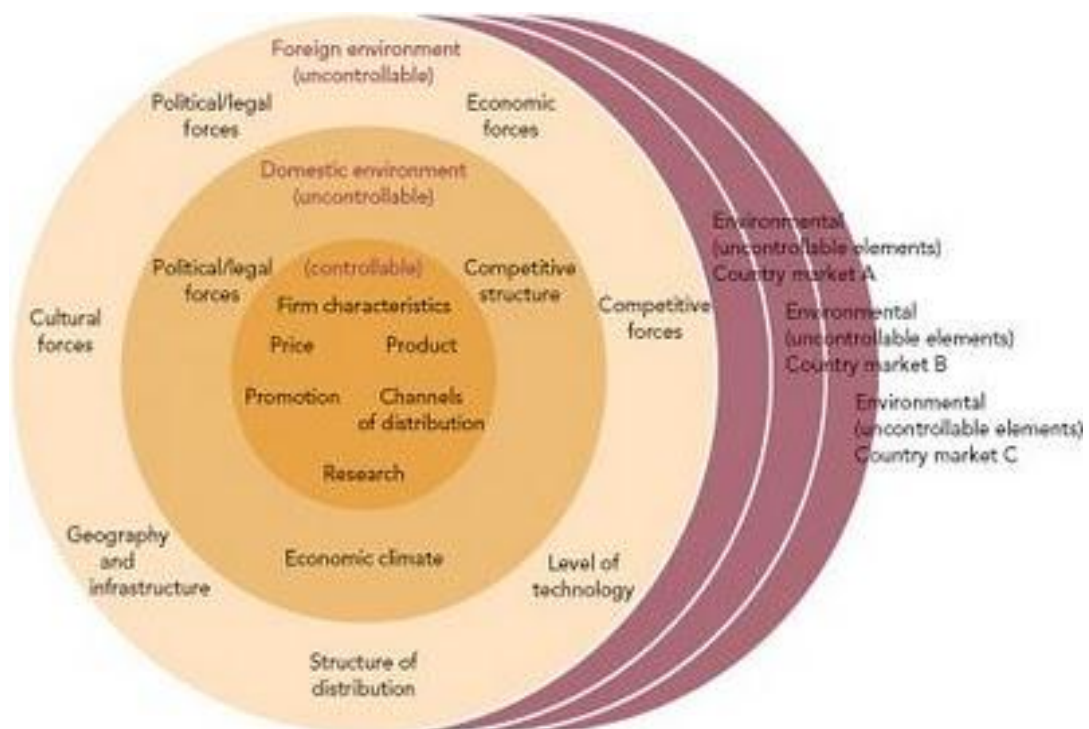


Figure 2: The International Marketing task

(Cateora 2009, 14)

In this figure above there are uncontrollable and controllable elements that need to be taken into account. Controllable elements can be arranged to be suitable for the company in the foreign markets, same time when uncontrollable elements cannot be influenced even in order to succeed they need to be adopted. I will focus on this more carefully in chapter 2: 4 P's concept.

As you can see there are two different types of uncontrollable elements: The other ones are affecting in domestic environment and others in foreign environment. Uncontrollable elements that are affecting in domestic environment are political-and legal forces, economic climate and competitive structure. Political decisions including domestic foreign policy can have straight effect on a firm's international marketing success. Again uncontrollable elements in foreign environment are economic forces, competitive forces, and level of technology, cultural forces and political-and legal forces for instance.

Exploring cultural forces is the most challenging part of the international marketing task. That's why I don't go too deep in this scene in my final work. Otherwise it would be too wide area and it really is not included in my subject, only partly.

In my study controllable elements in Finnish market are more important than elements in foreign environment. Of course I need to think about those as well because my study case is a foreign company. Basically I focus on our Finnish domestic market but from the point of view how Specsavers coming to the Finnish market affected on it.

Controllable elements are still taking account from the point of view of a foreign environment. In foreign environment actuates price, promotion, product, channels of distribution and research. These controllable elements need to be taken into consideration carefully in decision-making. In this case company can accomplish the controllable elements on foreign market with the most suitable way according to their marketing strategy. The uncontrollable elements and their target groups need to be taken into account as well. (Cateora 2009, 14)

2 COMPANY PRESENTATION: SPECSAVERS

The year 2009 exceeded all forecasts, which were based on the global economic recession and Finland's increasing unemployment. The total turnover for a speciality business decreased by 6,6 % in 2008 and at the same time retail business in optometry increased by 8,7 % compared to the previous years. Because of the great number of year 2009-2010, the successful campaigns of the larger companies in the field created the best seasonal growth of all times. However, from June 2009 onward, the optical field was able to increase turnover each month by 6-16 % and by the end of the year the cumulative 8.7 % increase was registered as a 308 million euro turnover. The turnover increased in this sector by 25 million euro in a year. All these number above are telling how big increase has happened in the field during the last two years. (Optitieto Oy 2009-2010)

Changes in the chain activities are continuing. New chain businesses and changes in existing chain businesses have hampered comparison between different years. Eyen, a chain with approximately 40 businesses on the field, did bankruptcy. On the other hand, Fenno Optiikka, which began operations at the end of 2008, entered the market with 60 businesses. Synsam and Cazze, which were before separated companies appeared under one name in 2009 representing 75 opticians businesses altogether. There are some businesses under the group "other businesses" because these companies are not belonging in any chain. There are 309 businesses under that section. The number of locations for the third largest chain, Specsavers, increased last year by 7 % making a total of 92 locations. A significant number of the locations are owned by the private enterprises. Silmäasema, the second largest chain in the field didn't go through any changes; it has still the same 123 outlets. The number-one chain in the field is Instru Optiikka Oy. It increased its number of businesses by 10 % primarily due to new franchising units. The total number of businesses is now 165.

The 308 million euro turnover from the optical retail trade in 2009 was divided between the old and some of the new businesses. Fenno Optiikka is a new chain and took 5 % slice out of the market share with a turnover of 16 million; the united

Synsam and Cazze gathered 22 million euros, which is 7 % of the market share. For the first time Specsavers was able to gather the information about the turnover of nearly all of its businesses for the entire year and it reflected strong growth. The chain took 13 % market share with a turnover of 40 million euro. “Other businesses” market share was 26%. Instru Optiikka was more successful than previous years and increased its market share to 29 % with a turnover of 89 million euro. (Optitieto Oy, 2009-2010)

According to previous, the magnificent growth during the last year and the new record for the total turnover, were a success for the whole optical industry. But still, the growth was distributed very unevenly; a type of polarization is intensifying as Taru Korja, managing director of Optituote Oy is saying. The good businesses will become better and some will be doing worse than before. (Optitieto Oy 2009-2010)

Opticians have historically been either independent or worked in small chains. Only a few have achieved national coverage. The Specsavers’ business solution enables professionals to enjoy professional and business ownership with national integrated marketing strategies. The group reached 605 joint venture partners in 2002 that run 428 stores in three countries. The sales reached £430 million, a 12% increase.

Specsavers is about 26-years old British company that has dramatically expanded its operations in their domestic market but significantly worldwide. When entering to the foreign market the company needs to be very sophisticated with the planning process.

2.1 Business idea, values and organization

In Specsavers website is written that Doug and Mary Perkins is a couple of far-sighted optometrists who seized the opportunity to change the optical care industry after its deregulation in 1983. At that time patients had very little confidence in

optical care and many opticians were dissatisfied with their jobs. They wanted a closer involvement in the ownership and management of their operations and the new act gave them the chance to realize this dream.

The original business idea that gave birth to the Specsavers group was clear, simple and consistent. The main mission is to provide eye care services with an affordable price. Low prices have enabled the large production size and great order volume. "Choose 2; pay 1" concept is used in all Specsavers stores. Clear aim is to dominate market in the Netherlands and Scandinavia.

Buying new eyeglasses should come more so-called normal shopping instead of big investment. The research made by TNS gallop in 2009 showed that two thirds of people are experiencing eyeglasses more as an accessory than before. The result of the TNS research improves even more Specsavers business idea; when the prices are low it is not a big investment to buy new eyeglasses, even just for fun.

The mission of the Specsavers according to Andrew Molle, the Marketing Director is "to be the best value opticians satisfying personal eye care needs at affordable prices clearly, simply and consistently". This message is reflected in the company- and its marketing culture: Clarity, Consistency and Simplicity. (www.specsavers.com)

2.1.1 Company image and core values

Company itself defines what kind of image it wants consumers to have about them. Generally speaking, everything what will be seen and is related to company through the name, logo, products, personnel and everything that represents the company, effects on its image. This only points out the fact that the company has a chance to build up the image, which is attracting their target customers from the perspective of their mission.

When thinking about the Specsavers Company, they have build up the image, which is reaching the consumers, sending them a clear message about the company values and pricing system. It is all about the 'green and economic' way of thinking, like it is taught to the employees of Specsavers. What comes to marketing, I think that the message of the company name, logo, colours, advertises and 'two for one'- basic pricing system is very clear. It is closely related to Specsavers Company values: it is the base of this whole business. The marketing plan will be created for the Specsavers Seinäjoki in this final work.

The business is driven by a powerful set of values which is derived from the Perkins family themselves and communicated to employees through road shows and communication sessions for instance at the lunch stage in new markets. "The important thing is we treat people as we would like to be treated", says Doug Perkins, Chairman & Joint Marketing Director. According the Perkins family the six essential values of Specsavers are:

→ Keep it simple. Get it done. Deliver our promises.

→ Treat people, as we would like to be treated ourselves

→ Value for money

→ Long term / led by opticians

→ Develop and train our people

→ Community participation

The basic idea is to sell as many eyeglasses as possible with low price to achieve a customer delight. The main thing is not selling; it is the whole service. The Mission Statement: 'Specsavers- the best value opticians satisfying eye care need at affordable prices clearly, simply and consistently', is describing comprehensively the entity.

Communicating values of the business to its franchising partners must be carefully handled; there are over 1600 individual stores around the world run by mixture of opticians and retailers. Each of the countries and regions has its' own personality. In addition, senior management appreciates that meetings must be approached differently in order to move the business forward and successfully follow the values of the company in their operations locally.

The familial nature of the business means that joint venture partners are free to disagree with the senior management and voice their options. This is a two-way relationship that contrasts with the culture at major places where one board member previously worked. You can find also another important difference: the joint ventures are themselves self-contained family businesses, Specsavers partners know that all extra profits in their stores will go to them; it could be classified as a huge motivating factor. After the Doug Perkins, "The best thing to do is to have regional people running their own business- the ultimate motivation".

2.1.2 Resources and structure of the organization

The Perkins have stated that they intend to maintain family control of the firm, which currently employs all three of their children in senior roles. When the couple established this company, they both were opticians already. Specsavers is still very much a family run business with family values to match; they try to keep up these values needed. Continued expansion in Europe is planned with the immediate aim of being the market-dominating optician in the Netherlands and Scandinavia. They are opening new stores all the time so naturally more enthusiastic and educated staff is needed.

Most of chain stores are operating under a system that is called 'joint or venture partnership'. This operating model is similar to a franchise between Specsavers and the franchisee. Unlike many franchises, Specsavers stores are working under the policy that 'any Specsavers customer is our customer'. It works so that a cus-

customer from one branch of Specsavers can expect to get equal service from another branch elsewhere. This organizational structure differs from Specsavers own shares in the franchisee business rather than just providing goods and services under a franchise agreement. Such as in newer territories they operate with a normal franchise agreement. This way of operating is, for example, in Sweden, Norway and Spain.

In Finland there are only couple stores owned by the Specsavers chain; almost all stores have their own franchise entrepreneur even these stores are still working under the international concept. This model of operating enables result orientated and hard working environment because in a way, everyone are doing it to himself or herself. All stores need to have at least an optician in the store doing eye tests. This is huge benefit to the chains reputation and helps it a lot on its way to be the leader of the market.

When it comes to marketing, Specsavers is cooperating with the famous marketing agencies. All countries have their own of course, but the message is supposed to be same everywhere. After all the company can outsource some activities, and it has to, such as marketing. (www.specsavers.com)

2.2 Specsavers globally

Specsavers is British, the biggest privately owned optical industry group in the world. Doug and Mary Perkins who started the business in their spare bedroom on a table-tennis table founded the company in 1984. The UK Government deregulated professionals, including opticians, allowing them to advertise their products and services for the first time. They took advantage about the opportunity and did open their first Specsavers, value-for-money, quality eye care opticians in Guernsey and Bristol, followed quite soon by Plymouth, Swansea and Bath. (en.wikipedia.org)

Perkins' brought the world of entrepreneurship closer to these people by establishing the Specsavers Optical Group. The idea introduced two main innovations in optical care industry: the franchising model and the retail service concepts.

The aim of Perkins was to offer a wide range of stylish, fashionable glasses at affordable prices for everyone. The main value was to get company seen as trustworthy an optician as a local independent but with the huge buying power of a national company. That actually meant that savings could be passed on to the customers.

After prosperous expanding with its joint venture partnership approach to eyecare, the company's growth has been enormous. Specsavers hit the milestone of 100 stores in July 1988, 200 in 1993, 300 in 1995, 400 in 2000, 500 in 2003, 600 in 2004 and 700 in 2005. Successfully the first store opened in Netherlands 1997, the first one in Sweden 2004, and 2005 saw the first in Denmark and Norway. In 2006 the first Specsavers store opened in Spain, and 2007 the company began supplying in Australia, at the same time opening their first store in Finland. The 1000th store was opened in 2008 in Roosendaal, Holland, followed by the launch on the first three Specsavers stores in Australia. In 2009 there were 173 stores in Australia, and 24 stores in New Zealand. Specsavers turnover is already over 1, 6 billion dollars.

Specsavers is also the retail market leader in contact lenses with its own brand of Easyvision monthly and daily disposable lenses. The company has also driven the use of continuous-wear lenses. Nowadays it is the largest provider of home-delivery contact lenses in Europe.

The company is continuing its expansion. It did start from two persons working in very primitive circumstances and now there are more than 26 000 headquarters worldwide, more than 1390 stores across the Channel Islands, UK, Ireland, The Netherlands, Scandinavia, Spain, Australia and New Zealand.

2.3 Product range

Specsavers have quite a large range of products. Main field of business are eye-glasses, sunglasses with the power and contact lenses, hearing aids are also taking its space in the market. Specsavers is using the world famous lens producer PENTAX, no matter what kind of lenses you need single vision, vary focal or multi-focal, it will be made for you by using the newest technology. All Specsavers frames include PENTAX single vision lenses. There are over 1000 different kind of frames to choose from famous brands.

Specsavers is not only selling products as eyeglasses, contact lenses and so on it is all about the eye care services of optometrist, ophthalmologist and salespersons. It is richness to have these services with the product itself.



Exclusively at Specsavers

Osiris is the United Kingdoms best selling designer brand frame. Osiris-frames are not guaranteed being overlooked; they are fun and trendy as well as emphasize the wearer's personality. Osiris is the Specsavers own brand. The latest design and manufacturing methods are ensuring that the innovative Osiris collection retains its position in the top of the spectacle trends.



TOMMY HILFIGER

Exclusively at Specsavers

Tommy Hilfiger is the fastest growing lifestyle brand in Europe and one of the strongest and best-known fashion names in the United States. Hilfiger frame collection, which Specsavers is selling exclusively, offers a range of client's personal style and especially for their assertiveness emphasizing the trendy, classic, retro and stylish frames. Specsavers' Tommy Hilfiger collection has both feminine and masculine frames. The collection is designed for sophisticated and style-conscious customers who want to use immediately recognizable international fashion brands.



JASPER CONRAN

Exclusively at Specsavers

Jasper Conran, whose successful career started over 20 years ago, includes the Great Britain's best-known designers. Today Jasper Conran is regarded as a British style and fashion guru. Specsavers sells exclusively Jasper Conrans elegant, British-style frame collection. Frames are timeless with a modern twist and are steeped in a quality and professional skill of the designer.



MISSONI

The famous Italian fashion house Missoni brand is synonym to innovative style. The brand's unique style is coming from the colour tones, patterns, different surface materials, zigzag patterns, stripes and figures of flames. Missoni clothing is described as a motley festival of colours and Specsavers frame collection is not making the exception. Prepare the details of bails and strong colour lines such as black and pink, brown and turquoise. From all of the frames you can get an eye-catching, colourful and fashionable accessory.



RED OR DEAD

Exclusively at Specsavers

Wayne and Gerardine Hemingway created a cult brand Red or Dead in 1983. Sexy, funny and colourful are perhaps appropriate words to describe the brand and patterns and structures, which deal even with the British humour and attitude. Red or Dead frames rely on self-confident women and men; especially those who want to bring out their own personality with the glasses. The brand is known about its original patterns and unusual models.

ULTRALIGHT

Ultralight is the second bestselling frame brand in Specsavers. Hi-tech approach to glasses based on new materials and manufacturing processes, which have already accomplished more than 75 light, modern and fashionable frame models. Ultralight offers both titan frames and frameless collections. Titan collection is made from pure, high-quality titanium. Material lightness and strength offers the user comfort and durability. Titanium is also hypoallergenic solution for clients whose skin does not tolerate metal. Frameless Ultralight collection is good for users who do not want to stand out with glasses. The lack of frames reduces the weight and creates the impression of floating lenses.



BENCH

Bench is one of the UK's leading urban street fashion brands, which has received foothold among the youth and young adults. Specsavers own Bench frame collection is designed to be faithful to its urban roots. There are trendy models, which are adapted to the shape of the eye frames combining a strong and urban world of the colours, which the Bench is a well-known brand.



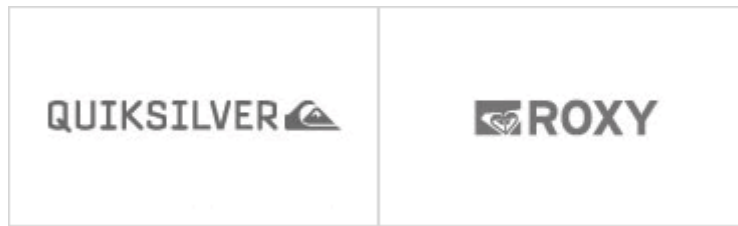
FCUK/FRENCH CONNECTION

In Specsavers exclusively sale FCUK and French Connection collections represent completely different styles. FCUK frames are fun and colourful while its mother brand French Connection frames is classic and sophisticated. Youth-targeted FCUK frames design is modern and in acetate and metal combination is added a touch of colour. FCUK is not afraid to take risks; with its frames users can feel free to reflect their own personalities. French Connection is known about its classic and retro style. Colour shades of dark French Connection frames are the perfect stylish accessory.



ANIMAL

Animal is the latest addition to Specsavers designer frame selections. The collection of colourful and fashionable frames is aimed to young adults. The collection is daring and perfect example of a liberal Animalia connecting culture.



QUIKSILVER AND ROXY

Quiksilver and Roxy collections are reflecting to high quality and modernity international surfing and skateboarding. Brands core values include extreme performance, which are reflected in exclusively Specsavers sell collections. Active man directed Quiksilver collection consists of 20 different frame models with emphasis on clear characteristics as well as brand new frame technologies and materials. Quiksilver uses innovative techniques to highlight its brand technical expertise, which draws its strength from nature. Roxy-women have high expectations. Specsavers brand identity is encapsulated in the range of top fashion hi-tech frames. As well as to beach and urban suitable Roxy style glows bright and bold colours.

Specsavers is combined with a good price/ quality ratio, style, quality and professionalism. Specsavers own frame collection and its pricing systems aim to convey to the customer clear understanding and offering an affordable pricing method. No matter in which Specsavers pricing category you choose from, you can be sure about their quality. Specsavers guarantee that economic eyeglasses are according to their core values accessible for all without sacrificing the quality and performance. The frame collection is based on the principle that will help customers clearly understand the added value of the each price range. Added value is forming in each of the frame models in addition to the upcoming features and benefits. Marketing leading collection represents the latest design and manufacturing techniques utilizing the latest framework. Whatever is the budget of the customer, Specsavers collection is offering innovative and fashionable option for everyone. (www.specsavers.fi)

Specsavers' contact lenses are a convenient and great value alternative to glasses. Market share of contact lenses is increasing all the time. During the decades the technique of the different lens types has improved amazingly and it means that they are now more comfortable than ever. No matter what is your lifestyle there will be contact a lens to suit you.

Lot of options are available: daily, two-weekly or monthly disposables; all day-all nights lenses you can sleep in; varifocal monthly disposables; toric daily or monthly disposable lenses, which are suitable for astigmatism and even coloured lenses which can change your appearance.

Specsavers Easyvision contact lenses are very high quality and suitable for use in different situations. Star-priced lenses offer a very affordable alternative to occasional contact lens use. In standard assortment there is a variety of disposable and monthly disposable lenses and toric monthly disposable lenses. From Premium and Elite class you will find the lenses in addition to multifocal lenses.

Monthly lenses. Easyvision Star, Standard, Premium and Elite Monthly lenses are designed for maximum comfort; you can use them on daily basis.

Disposable lenses. Easyvision Star, Standard, Premium and Elite disposable lenses are designed for maximum comfort; you can use them on daily basis.

Toric lenses. Easyvision Toric lenses are created for people with the astigmatism. With toric lenses you will see more clearly. In Easyvision product range you will find both toric disposables and monthly disposable lenses.

The continued use of contact lenses. Easyvision continued use of contact lenses are revolutionary lenses that can be used for night and day purpose 30-days- you can even sleep lenses in your eyes.

Multifocal lenses. With Easyvision Multifocal lenses you can see all the great distances because the lens has variable intensity change. There are disposable and monthly disposable lenses in Easyvision multifocal assortment.

3 MARKETING PLAN

For creating this marketing plan I have used the base of 'Next Year's Marketing Plan chapter 19', Marketing for Hospitality and Tourism 2003, 3e Philip Kotler, John Bowemen and James Makens. This base is providing a map for all marketing activities of the company for the year 2011-2012, it also ensures that marketing activities are in agreement with the corporate strategic plan and forces marketing managers to review and think through objectively all steps in the marketing process for example.

When gathering information for this marketing plan, I have been working closely with my employers to get all the information needed, used internet and marketing books to give me a basic and clear line for creating this marketing plan.

The main things I will go through when doing this marketing plan are, first of all, corporate connection and current- state analysis. That means to follow company's strategic plan and exploring the marketing audit that presents background data on the market, product, competition and distribution. To follow, I will explore the environmental analysis, segmentation and targeting. Then comes action plans as strategies and tactics and resources needed to support these plans, objectives, preparation the future and so on.

When exploring the customer satisfaction I have used qualitative research. It is survey about the customer satisfaction to the products and services provided; I have gathered the summary of the customer's answers in customer's satisfaction survey sent to customers, after purchasing situation and comparably after the customer get the products. I will affiliate the survey questions at the end of this work. Specsavers Seinäjoki is using the Maze system to map customer satisfaction.

3.1 The company's current-state analysis

In this chapter I will go through different concepts of marketing, which are necessary to know when processing this final work. I will explore marketing issues utilizing the 4 P's marketing concept and through the international marketing task (chapter 1.3). The four P's is a marketing mix for product, price, place and promotion. E. Jerome McCarthy proposed a 4 P's classification in 1960, which has seen widely used. The marketing mix consists of everything the firm can do to influence the demand for its product. I also explore the company's operating environment, according to the company's current state operations, competitors and customers.

During this chapter I will handle the company issues on the basis of 4 P's. The first thing will be the basic information about the company and its current operations, then products, which means the goods-and-services combination the company offers to the target market. Then comes Price; the amount of money customer have to pay to obtain the product, Place includes company activities that make the product available to target consumers and the last one is Promotion, which is presenting the activities that communicate the merits of the product and persuade target customers to buy it.

An effective marketing programme blends all of the marketing mix elements into an integrated marketing programme designed to achieve the company's marketing objectives by delivering value to consumers. (Kotler 2008, 158)

Almost all of the parts in marketing mix are categorized as controllable elements in 'International Marketing Task' (chapter 1.3). Controllable elements are the key part of the international marketing task as they can be affected when needed. Controllable elements consist of product, channels of distribution, price and promotion. After promotion mix I will go shortly through operating environment analysis, customer-and competition analysis.

3.1.1 Specsavers entered to Finnish market

Before year 2007 Finland's optical market was quiet and easygoing. In the market there were a couple of bigger and old optical chains and many small private optical stores. There was not really advertising or any kind of big marketing in this field of business. People didn't know how the pricing goes, when it comes to the eye-glasses and contact lenses. It was known that eyeglasses were expensive and people didn't go and buy glasses if they didn't really have to. Basically all customers of this business came through the ophthalmologist. For some reason contact lenses in Finnish market is also unknown subject, even feared. So there was also niche of contact lens market.

Specsavers started in Finland in July 2007 aiming to provide Finnish consumers high-quality eye care services and eyeglasses even 25% under the average prices of optical industry level. Two first Specsavers stores were opened in Vaasa and Kokkola in July 2007. During the spring 2008 Specsavers bought Tähti Optikko Group-chain from Kesko and Specsavers chain increased the number of their stores by 30 in Finland. Before this there were 19 Specsavers stores already in Finland. Same year 2008 Specsavers bought 26 stores from Eyen optical chain, so totally at this point Specsavers owned 91 stores in Finland but the chains growth was still going on. At the moment Specsavers has 13% market share in Finland which points that it is 3rd biggest opticians' chain in Finland. Instrumentarium have still the biggest market share. In 2010 Specsavers Finland had a big change in their head management team: Hele-Hannele Aminoff came to replace Pekka Happonen as a new director of the Specsavers Finland. All Specsavers stores in Finland have optician's service and also over the half of the stores have already ophthalmology service.

When Specsavers stepped to the Finnish market it had negative reception from the other optic stores, which is very understandable because of cheap prices of Specsavers. Cutting prices does not fit into the industry. Optical industry even in Finland was not enthusiastic to drop their prices, says Perkins in an interview of

Taloussanomat 2009. Among the Finnish statistic center prices of eyeglasses have decreased about 12% after the year 2007.

Eyeglass market in Finland has been stable a long time. Instrumentarium is dominating the whole market with its 30% market share and Silmäsema-Opticians are 2nd best with 20 % the market share. This balanced situation has prevailed here too long. Specsavers noticed the potential and marketing niche in Finland and results are amazing already. Specsavers with its prices is almost too big piece of bite for the competitors in Finland. They have needed to do big changes that they can stay in this revolutionary price fight. (Taloussanomat/09)

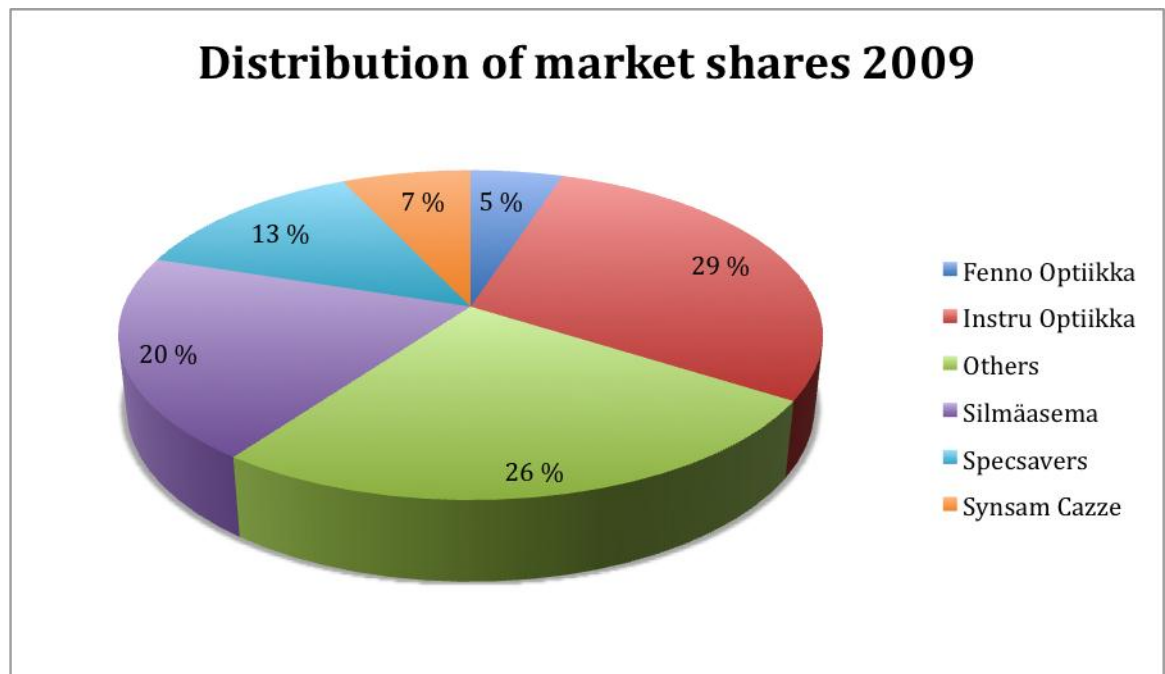


Figure 3: Distribution of market shares 2009

(Optitieto Oy, The Optical Sector in Finland 2009-2010)

3.1.2 The company

Marketing audit is a systematic and periodic examination of a company's current operations, objectives and environment. In this and following chapters consisting of the basic information about the Specsavers Seinäjoki, current- state and environmental analysis. Current state analysis is the section of a marketing plan that describes the target market and the company's position in it.

The company's marketing environment includes forces close to the company that affect its ability to serve its consumers, such as other company departments, channel members, suppliers, competitors and other publics. The environment is not only consisting of the controllable elements, it has to adapt all uncontrollable elements as well: it is presenting both threats and opportunities. The company must carefully analyse its environment so that it can avoid the threats and take advantage of the opportunities.

Optical field's transformation began in the summer of 2007 when the English Specsavers chain arrived to Finland with a strong price revolution. The chain currently has 92 stores, of which 72 (6th of April 2010) are an entrepreneur-led. Because of the Specsavers' volume, it has registered as a largest optical chain in Finland and with its euro selling they are registered to be on third place in Finland. The achievement is great and unprecedented. The linchpin of the chain is local entrepreneurship. The Finnish eyeglass repurchase time has fallen during this period from four and half years to three and a half years and the average cost of spectacles has dropped considerably. After Specsavers' entering to the market the whole optical market has changed. There will not be return to the former point and the sector has had to revise their policies. Spectacles are increasingly becoming apparel and more people buying the eyeglasses according to different purposes.

Specsavers Seinäjoki has been opened in shopping centre Epstori, 11th of September 2008. Epstori is the most popular shopping centre in Seinäjoki, located just in the city core. Compared to the other Specsavers stores, which have changed from the other operating optical stores to be a Specsavers store, this store is ex-

ceptionally organic store and the only store in Europe, which is located on the second floor.

Premises (leased premises) are located in shopping centres, which we built according to the entrepreneur's plans and needs. There are three eye test-rooms equipped with modern visual equipment's. In addition, the store is very modern and clean all the time including the colours of Specsavers; green and white. There are over 900 different frames for women and men.

Hanna Rautava and Anssi Kivistö own Specsavers Seinäjoki, the same entrepreneurs own also the store Specsavers Kauhava. They both have been working years in this field of industry as opticians. In Seinäjoki there are working two full-time opticians as the entrepreneurs, three full-time sellers and one part-time seller. Also, as the major benefit for the store, cooperation with the Coronaria's ophthalmologists has begun during the spring 2010.

There are several strengths as well as opportunities what come to Specsavers Seinäjoki and Kauhava. Firstly about the strengths, Specsavers Seinäjoki has been doing great since its first operating day 2008. The turnover during the first three months exceeded all the expectations, it was 475 000 €, which is more than some smaller stores are making in a year. The turnover of the Specsavers Seinäjoki in 2009 was around 1.2 million euro. The aim is to increase the turnover every year and keep the market leader position in this area of Southern Ostrobothnia. According to Specsavers' estimation, the market share in Seinäjoki 2009 was 24% from the total sales. The first fourth of the year 2010 has been about the same level than the same period last year.

Their respective owners have financed Specsavers Opticians Seinäjoki business. The economic situation is stable and very progressive.

Finance management and payroll is largely outsourced to a local accounting firm. Entrepreneurs have long-term cooperation with the entrepreneurs of accounting firm. Accounting firm has been chosen mainly because of accounting firm's entre-

preneurs' economic expertise. Accounting office's entrepreneur also operates as an external member of the board in Seinäjoki and Kauhava companies.

Know-how in store of Seinäjoki is at a very high level. The both entrepreneurs are also optometrists. Their skills in the company are very strong. The other owner Anssi Kivistö has been operating in the optical field actively already 25 years as a business management positions and for example, as a trainer and lecturer at various contact lens courses in Finland, but also abroad. He has obtained all the potential additional education in the field what is possible. The businesses where he has been working as a manager have been awarded the prestigious prizes, for example, the optician business of the year and the apprenticeship educator of the year as well. Hanna Rautava is the other owner of the stores of Seinäjoki and Kauhava. She has been operating in the field for 15 years. Rautava and Kivistö have been colleagues in their previous job during last seven years and they have been doing together the previous mission with a great success as well.

All personnel of Specsavers Seinäjoki and Kauhava have been selected outside of the optical field. Specsavers' strategy differs a lot from the usual approach, so the entrepreneurs have seen it as a strength that the personnel don't need to unlearn the old habits they have, they can absorb the "right" way to do things right away. They have found out this to be easier way of doing things. The most important thing about the personnel is the personality, ambition and passion to do that work with the entrepreneurs and the whole Specsavers Company. The vendors have been strongly trained in a firm and they have also done the educations of the Specsavers Academy of Finland.

To conclude, Specsavers Opticians Seinäjoki's financial situation is stable, taking into account the fact that the company has been operating only for two years. Sales have stabilized as well and the development of the result is positive all the time as you can see in SWOT-analysis figure 4. Business premises and equipment's are modern, new and functional. The personnel is well motivated and professional. Cooperation between the stores of Seinäjoki and Kauhava is very easy, which is important.

It could put so, that the weaknesses includes, for example the fact that the company is new and has not been operating too long time in the field in Seinäjoki. People have been customers of the competitor's years so it is challenging to get them out from there. Also the concept in peoples mind about the fact that you can go 'shopping' the eyeglasses as well as you go shopping to get new shoes or jacket is not understood yet. It is actually possible with the Specsavers' prices. The mission is to renew this way of thinking. Also the concept that you could not get the high quality with the low price is wrong and should get renewed. Because of Specsavers high quality lens producers and great buying volume it is possible to get high quality with affordable price.

SWOT-analysis for the Specsavers Opticians Seinäjoki

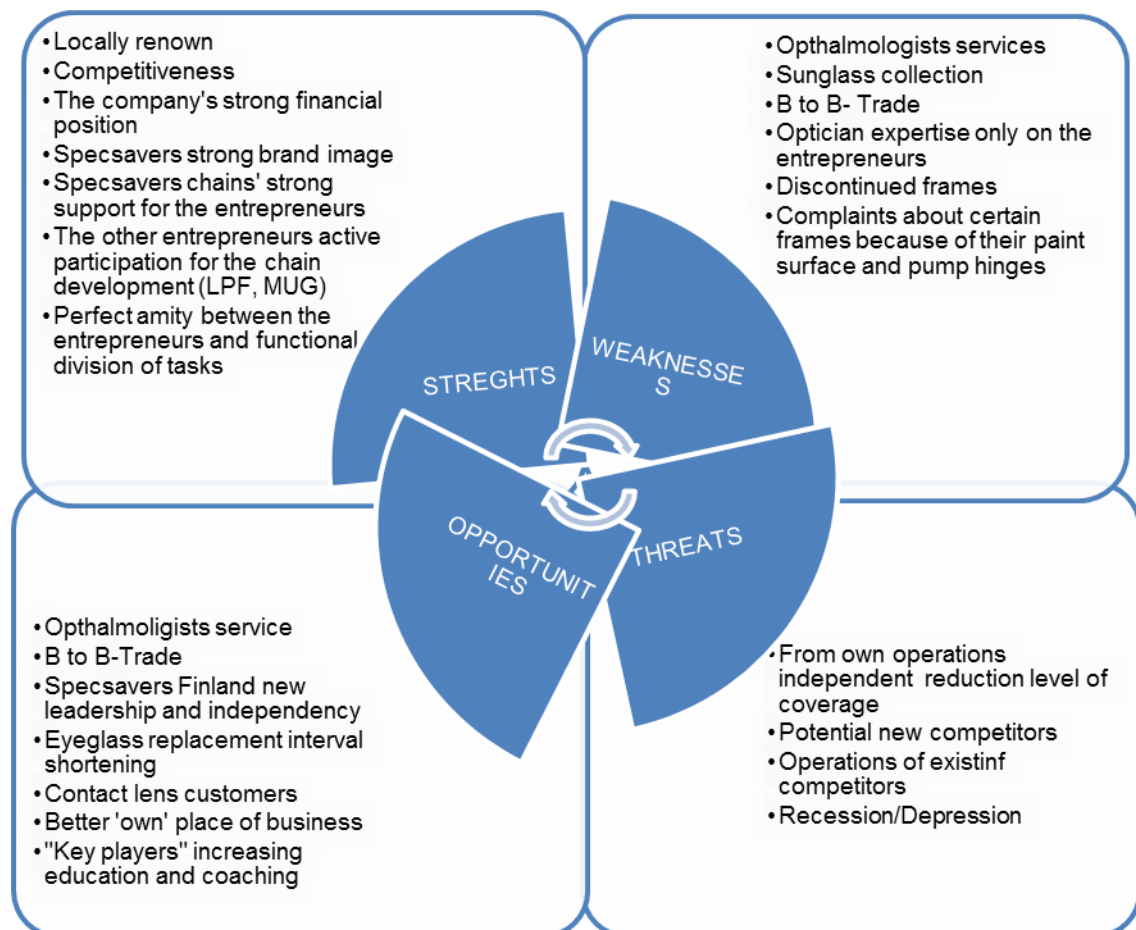


Figure 4: The SWOT-analysis

3.1.3 4 P's concept

Products

Product is explored by defining three levels of the product, consumer product categorization and the product life cycle. Product can be explored in three different levels: core product, actual product and augmented product.

To conclude, products can be categorized according to how often they are bought. There are four different categories: convenience products, shopping products, speciality products and unsought products. Product life cycle defines different phases of new innovation.

Product is anything that can be offered to a market for attention, acquisition, use or consumption that might satisfy a want or need. It includes physical objects, services, persons, places, organizations and ideas or mixes of these entities. On the other hand, services are products that consist of activities, benefits or satisfaction that are offered for sale that is essentially intangible and is not requiring any kind of ownership. (Kotler 2008, 500)

'Product is a key element in overall market offering', describes Kotler. (2008, 500)

Market offering is a combination of product, services, information or experiences, which is offered to a market aiming to satisfy consumers' need or want. A company need to put forth a value proposition as a set of benefits they pledge customer's needs. Marketing offers are not just offering physical products; they also include services, activities or benefits, just like Specsavers is doing. (Kotler 2008, 9)

'Many sellers make a mistake of paying more attention to the specific products they offer than to the benefits and experiences produced by these products. They see themselves as selling a product rather than providing a solution to a need', Kotler is describing this view of marketing (2008, 9) and continues 'they are so

taken with their products that they focus only on existing wants and lose sight of underlying customer needs. They forget that a product is only a tool to solve a consumer problem.'

When thinking about creating a marketing plan for the Specsavers Seinäjoki and Kauhava I should be able to indicate the benefits offered by the product and services. You need to think from the customers' point of view, how these products and services are meeting their need; as well as, from the company's point of view, how can they find right way of marketing their products not just as products but the benefits and experiences produced by these products and services to customer.

Specsavers as well as other operating companies in optical sector are one piece of the whole health care system. Their products and services are wanted, but they are also necessarily needed for kind of safety, like in Maslow's Hierarchy of needs. (Coming in chapter 3.1.6) What comes to product and services offering in Specsavers they are going to categorize as a desirable form, which is the most ideal form of marketing. According to Kotler, (2008, 11), customers are forming expectations about the value and satisfaction that various market offerings are delivering and buying accordingly, The simple fact is that satisfied customers buy again and tell others about the good experiences and dissatisfied usually switch to competitors.

Three levels of the product

Customers are really buying more than just products and services; they are buying the idea that the product can offer them. According to Kotler, (2008, 501), the product must be considered on three levels: the core product, actual product and augmented product.

Core product. It is presenting what the customer really buys. When thinking about the Specsavers market offering the core products are: eye care services, eye-glasses as single vision, vary focal or multifocal or contacts lenses.

Actual product. Actual product consists of five characteristics: a quality level, features, styling, a brand name and packaging. For example, Specsavers products are the result of high-quality producers design in one package.

Augmented product. The third level contains augmented product, which includes additional benefits: installation, after sale service, warranty, delivery and credit. Customers receive these benefits when buying a product.

According to the Specsavers operation: the customer has ordered eyeglasses, when the store receives the completed eyeglasses, the customer will be informed about the ready-made glasses and she needs to come and get those glasses personally. When the customer comes, the staff of the store is making sure the customer sees as well as possible and the eyeglasses are fitting well on customers face. All the little details can effect on the last result, which is of course the best possible vision and feeling to the customer. The customer is told that he has a two-year guarantee of the quality and 3 month satisfaction guarantee, which enables the customer to be 100% happy to the product bought. To conclude, if the customer follows the instructions given when coming to get ready-made eyeglasses, the functions should be easy to learn.

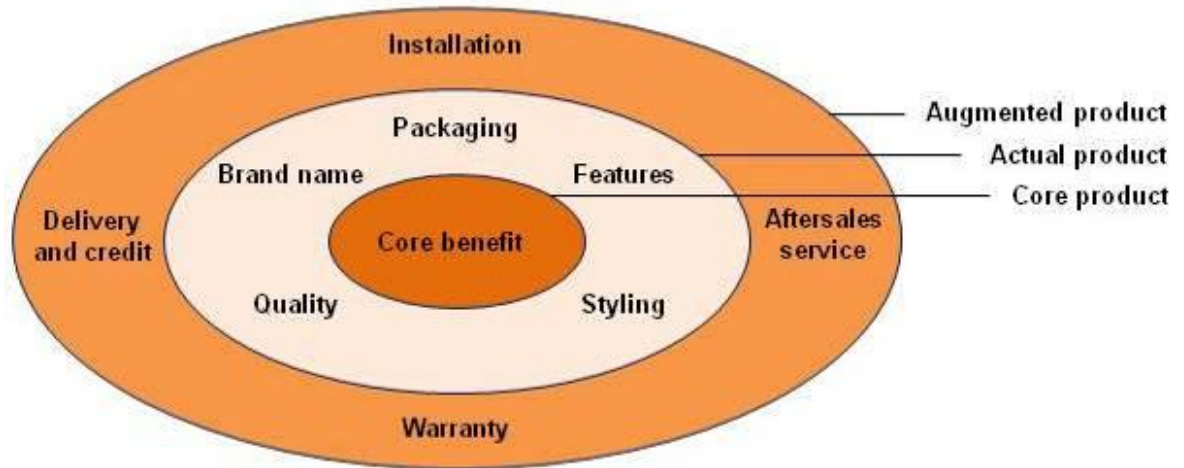


Figure 5: The three levels of product

Consumer products

Consumer products are products bought by final consumers for personal consumption. These goods are classified according to consumers shopping habits and so on can be divided into four groups: convenience products, shopping products, speciality products and unsought products.

Convenience products. The convenience products are consumer goods and services that are bought on a regular basis. They don't require much efforts or comparison to other products. For example, every day products such as soap, newspapers and so on can be classified as convenience products.

Shopping products. These are the products customer compares carefully on suitability, quality, price and style. Shopping products are bought less frequently and customer makes more effort in gathering information and making comparison. Furniture and clothing could be examples about shopping products.

Products can be divided into two sections: non-durable and durable. Non-durable products are consumed quickly, they are not even meant to last long time, at the same time durable products are used for a longer time. Specsavers products are

durable goods as recommendable changing period for the eyeglasses for example is two years.

Speciality goods. This group contains speciality products with unique characteristics or brand identification for which a significant group of buyers is willing to make a special purchase effort. Customers don't make comparisons, as they want the exact product with special features. Luxury goods and designer clothes belong to the speciality product group.

Unsought products. The customers are not either aware of these products or don't normally buy unsought products. All new innovations belong to this group before people become aware of them through advertising for example. Unsought products require lot of advertising, personal selling and other marketing efforts to bring a slight idea of its functions to customers.

As for Specsavers product range world wide, they are shopping products; customers make comparison and don't buy them frequently. It is normally about the quality, price and style. (Kotler 2008, 502-503)

The product life cycle

The product life cycle shows the phase the product has in the target market. The product life cycle involves five distinct stages: product development, introduction, growth, maturity and decline.

The first phase includes development, which starts when then the company finds and develops a new product idea. After that follows the slow sales period growth as the product is introduced to the market. The growth is the period of rapid market acceptance and increasing profits. After managing brands and growth, the maturity of the target group has become aware of the product. Finally when having a stable position, the product sales begin to decline unless there are new interesting features to attract customers. (Kotler 2008, 571)

Specsavers' has done frequent marketing around the world all the time. However, Specsavers' products belong to growth phase at least in Finnish market. Other countries, where it started earlier, has achieved the maturity phase, but basically the growth phase is still prevailing.

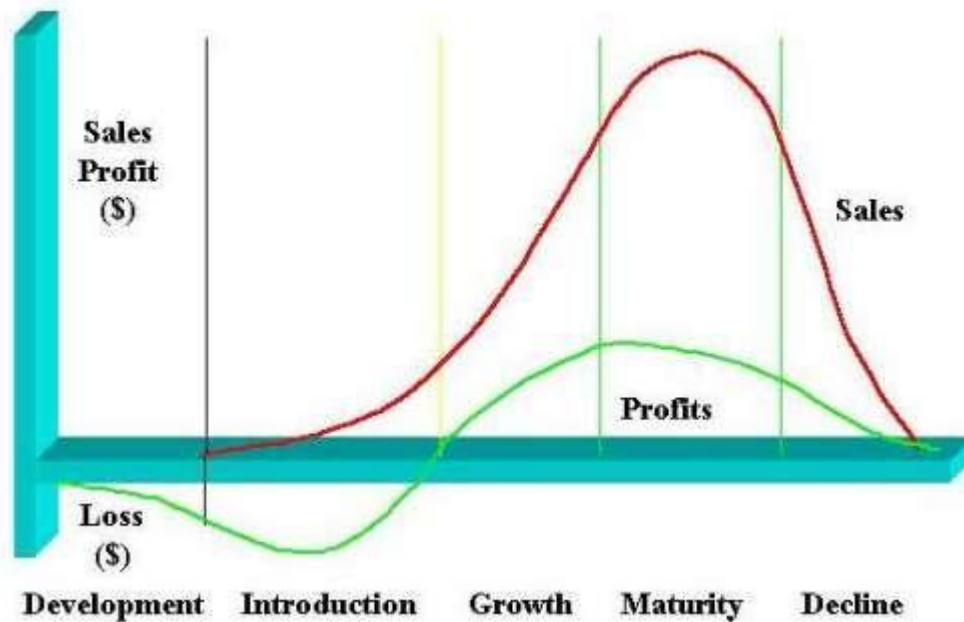


Figure 6: The product life cycle

Product positioning and differentiation

Positioning is the act of designing the company's offering and image so that they occupy a meaningful and distinct competitive position in the target customer's minds. (Kotler, 1997)

Positioning and differentiation are tools for exhibit how a company will be serving to their target groups. At first the company needs to choose whom it will serve for. After deciding which market segments to enter, the company must decide how it

will differentiate its market offering for each targeted segment and what kind of position the company wants to conquer with those segments. (Kotler 2008, 157)

The company needs to decide the quality level of their product, which affects also on the pricing. Paramount importance is to understand customers needs better than competitors and deliver more customer value. Then you need to be able to differentiate and position the product with the greater value than the other markets offerings and gain the competitive advantage. Differentiating the product from the other marketers is important; if consumers don't see the difference between the marketers, they won't see any reason to buy it. (Kotler 2008, 436)

The company can position a product on only one or several important differentiating factor. If trying to position on too many factors, can the result be consumer confusion or disbelief. To conclude it is more important to focus on a few factors. (Kotler 2008, 47)

When it comes to Specsavers products they are very high quality products and are having world-famous brands and they offer 'more-for-the-same'. That means they can attack competitors by introducing a brand offer with a comparable quality but a lower price. (Kotler 2008, 442)

The best option is to pick up to three factors, where only one factor can be so called 'functional factor' and others should be so called 'style-or image factors'. When I am thinking Specsavers positioning options, only the need for seeing can be categorized as a functional factor. Other reasons are categorized as wants because in this field of industry they are more the trend factors at the time or other image factors. (Rope 2005, 58)

Market positioning can be the key to success. Its mission is to give a product a clear, distinctive and desirable place. A product position is the way the product is defined by consumers on important attributes- the place the product occupies in consumers' minds relative to competing products. (Kotler 2008, 47, 432)

Price

'Price is the amount of money charged for a product or service, or the sum of the values that consumer exchange for the benefits of having or using the product or service', describes Kotler. (2008, 639)

The special feature of price is that it is the only revenue in marketing process, since all the other sectors require assets. Price is the most flexible in marketing mix (4 P's), other functions can be considered more permanent, and price can be checked and changed when necessary.

The decision to buy a product is based on the willingness to have a product, not a price itself. Pricing decision, like the other marketing mix decisions, must be based on a customer value. Rope (2005, 78) categorizes four different aspects of pricing: image, costs, target group and market. Pricing is one of the most important things what comes to image building. You can reflect the company image and the price level.

Traditionally thinking the price should have been set to cover the expenses. It is not completely simple to define a price, so that it both covers the cost and customers are willing to pay it. As setting a price there are also some psychological aspects that need to be taken into account. For instance, when the price ends with two nines, the product is more attractive compared to a similar product with an even price number. (Rope 2005, 75, 84)

Specsavers' product prices are very competitive when looking at the whole market. Even Specsavers is using high quality and well-known brands; the prices are low compared to the other market offers. They have good deals with the producers and purchasing volume is so big that they can order in bigger batches, so it is cheaper because of this fact as well. At the moment Specsavers is operating in same price level worldwide.

Value-based pricing. The most important thing is to have completed understanding of the value that a product or service creates for customer. Value-based pricing is setting the price based on buyers' perceptions of product values rather than costs. This way of pricing means that the product and marketing programme cannot be designed before setting the price.

When using value-based pricing you must find out what value buyers assign to different competitive offers; it is usually found hard to measure the value customers will attach to their products or services. If the marketers are charging more than the buyers' perceived value, the company's sales suffer meanwhile the marketer's are charging less, its product sell well, but produces less revenue than they would if they were priced at the level of perceived-value. (Kotler 2008, 641)

Good-value pricing. Marketers have noticed an obvious change in consumers' attitudes towards price and quality. Companies are bringing their pricing approaches into line with changing economic conditions and consumer price perceptions. This strategy has become well-known way of pricing nowadays; offering just the right combination of quality and good service at a fair price. (Kotler 2008, 641)

A company's value is the set of benefits or values it promises to deliver to consumers to satisfy their needs. Through the value propositions the company is disseminating information to consumers about the facts why consumer should buy exactly this company's brand rather than other market offers'. (Kotler 2008, 15)

Value-added pricing. In many business-to-business marketing cases, the pricing challenge is to build and keep the company's pricing power. Value-added pricing is described as power, which is escaping from the price competition and validating higher prices and margins without losing market share. The company must preserve or build the value of its market offers to keep the pricing power in correct level. They are reducing whatever they are selling to a commodity and run the risk of losing customer loyalty, if companies rely on price to capture and retain business. To increase the pricing power companies are adopting the value-added strategies. (Kotler 2008, 642)

Cost-based pricing. Where the value-added pricing strategies are setting the price ceiling, costs set the floor for the price that the company can charge, cost-based pricing involves setting prices based on the costs of producing, distributing and selling. A company's price could be an important element in its pricing system, like Ryanair, work to become the 'low-cost producers' in their industry. Companies with a lower cost are able to operate with lower prices, which enable the accomplishment of greater sales and profits.

Cost-plus pricing. Is the simplest pricing method by adding a standard mark-up to the cost of the product. It is ignoring demand and competitors' prices, which is not likely to lead to the best price. Mark-up pricing works only, if the price actually brings the expected level of sales. However, the mark-up pricing is quite a popular because by tying the price to cost, sellers simplify the pricing. They don't have to make frequent adjustments as demand changes.

Target profit pricing. It is based from the break-even pricing, another cost-oriented pricing approach. The company is trying to decide the price at which it will break even or make a target profit it is seeking. Target profit pricing is setting price to make a target profit. It uses the concept of a break-even chart to improve the total cost and total revenue expected at different sales volume levels.

Specsavers is using value-added pricing strategy to satisfy the customers need and to offer high-quality products with affordable prices. It is important to be aware of competitors pricing of similar products, if the same product is cheaper somewhere else, why would the customer come and buy the product from Specsavers? To quote the degree programme manager of Seinäjoki University Applied Sciences Päivö Laine, he went to one big competitor of Specsavers Opticians Seinäjoki store because of some good offer. He was waiting there over 10 minutes and no one even greet him, he decided not to go there again, even they had good offer of some products. It's not always the price that defines, where the consumers buy the product needed, if they appreciate the customer service for example more than the price; they go to the store they know they will get good service. The Specsav-

ers Opticians Seinäjoki have good position in Southern Ostrobothnias market, what comes to pricing system and customer service.

Promotion

A market is a package of actual and potential buyers of a product or service. These buyers share an existing need or want, which can be satisfied by the market offering. The actual size of the market is depending on the number of people, including both customers and potential buyers of the company. These people are willing to exchange these resources for what they want. A market does not have to be physical location where the customers and sellers are interacting; in this modern world of communication the businessmen can advertise a product or service on television, newspapers or on the Internet. Today it is so much easier, faster and the message reaches masses of people at the same time.

Promotion is the communication link between sellers and buyers for the purpose of influencing, informing, or persuading a potential buyer's purchasing decision. Promotion means all the action that communicates the merits of the product and persuades target customers to buy it. The communication landscape, including technological advances as Internet and new digital technologies, are changing rapidly. These ways of communication are spawning new 'market spaces' where companies are able to create and communicate the customer value and sustain long-term customer relationships. New media channels are forming an increasing proportion of marketing communications. (Kotler 2008, 50-51)

Communication is a vital part of customer relationship. Consumers have word-of-mouth communication with each other and with other public. This includes messages send outside from the company as well as feedback received from consumers. Usually companies are not wondering if they should communicate or not, they rather question about what kind of communication to use and how much to invest in doing it. (Kotler 2008, 691)

To create long-term customer relationships is vital for the company. To get new customer requires much more effort than get the old customer come and buy again. More about this subject is coming in next chapter 3.1.4 Marketing tools.

Promotion mix

Promotion mix consists of the specific blend of advertising, sales promotion, public relations, personal selling and direct marketing tools. The promotion mix is the company's primary communication activity: product, price and place must be coordinated for greatest communications impact. (Kotler 2008, 692)

Advertising is basically a non-verbal presentation and promotion of products. Secondly, sales promotion is aiming to short-term incentives to encourage the purchase of product. Public relations is the third tool, it is aiming to create a positive image and good relations with the media. Personal selling concludes to a presentation made directly in person. The fifth promotion tool is direct marketing. It is direct connections with carefully targeted individual consumers both to obtain an immediate response and to cultivate lasting customers.

When thinking about Specsavers marketing planning the best and the most suitable promotion tools are advertising and personal selling. Direct marketing is also used though. The Specsavers Company is operating at the moment with huge resources worldwide. Advertising is used to get people move and come to the store, after that personal selling is the thing how the company closes the relationship.

Communication process

Marketing communication can be viewed as a process, consisting of several important elements, which all affect into exactitude of the communication results. There is a huge difference between the customers, which means that market communicator needs to be aware of all the controllable elements in the communi-

cation process. In addition, communication programmes need to be developed for specific segments, niches and even individuals. (Kotler 2008, 698; Cateora 2005, 476)

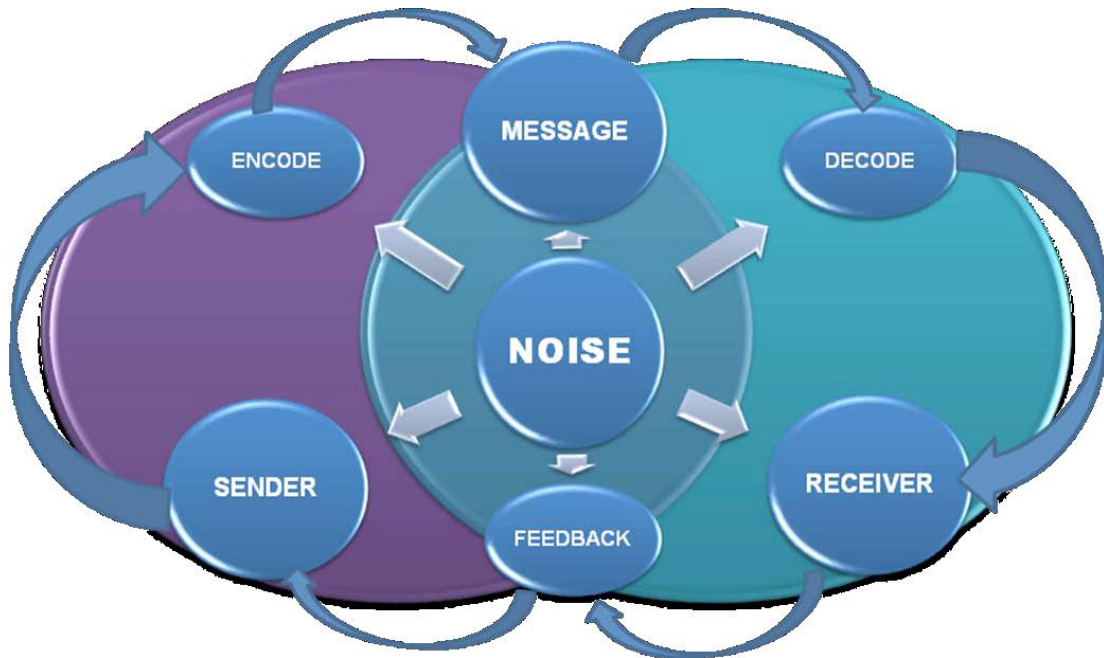


Figure 7: Communication process

The communication process includes seven basic elements. The main two elements in the process are the message sender and the message receiver, which is the target consumer. The major communication tool is the message or the chosen media.

Between the sender and the receiver are three communication functions: encoding, decoding and feedback. The encoding means how the sender converts the message into effective symbolism, ready to be transmitted to the receiver. The symbols can be words, illustrations or music for example: it depends on chosen media. Secondly, the decoding is how the receiver interprets the symbols received from the sender through the chosen media. Thirdly, in feedback the targeted receiver reacts to the sender's messages effectiveness. The sender is able to evaluate the communication process and was the message received in a desired way.

Noise is the last essential element of communication process. It consists of all the possible factors that can distract or affect the communication process within any of the above-mentioned elements. Those kinds of factors could be for example competitive activities or confusion. (Cateora 2005, 479; Kotler 2008, 699)

To communicate effectively the message designer must understand the consumer's field of experience and way of thinking. The message including words and other symbols that the receiver is familiar with, works perfectly. In addition, the sender must be good at encoding the message by thinking how receiver might decode it. The messages must be sent through the media that reach the target audience and feedback channels must be developed so that you can assess the audience's response to the message. This model points out the key factors in good communication. (Kotler 2008, 700)

When thinking about communication process in Specsavers Opticians Seinäjoki's operations, the most important things to take into account are personal sales work and advertising. Advertising is the way to get people to come to the store and rest is all about the personal sales work. First of all, the personnel need to be aware of the existing campaigns all the time. It cannot happen that customer comes after some interesting and good offer and then the sales person does not know about the offer. After the successful advertising the cash flow is getting bigger and basically the rest is on the shoulders of the personnel in the store; the knowledge and quality of customer service.

Channel of distribution

Producing a product or service and making it available to buyers requires building relationships with the key suppliers and resellers in the company's supply chain. The supply chain consists of 'upstream' and 'downstream' partners including suppliers, intermediaries and intermediaries' customers. When talking about the upstream from the manufacturer or service provider, it is the set of firms that supply the raw materials, components, parts, information and finance for example. How-

ever, the marketers have traditionally focused on the downstream side of the supply chain, which are the distribution channels that look forward towards the customer. Downstream distribution channel partners like for example, wholesalers and retailers, form a vital connection between the company and its target consumers.

When choosing a suitable channel of distribution, the nature of the company, its exports, competition level and the target group characteristics have to be taken into account.

Specsavers stores are operating themselves as distributors of their products. The selling is happening in the store, then the wanted product is sending to a lens factor and the lens factor is sending the ready-made product back to the store where the customer will get it.

To continue about Specsavers operating model, order-delivery process is operating strongly under the Specsavers concept because all IT programs and products are coming from the chain. In the store there are models of all frames but the real frame stock is situated in the lens factory in England, where all the eyeglasses are manufactured. Orders are handled electronically from the store to the factory and ready-made glasses are delivered from England to the stores in airfreight. Logistics costs are small compared to traditional optical stores. After the customer has chosen the frames, the lenses will be sold next and scaled to be the best fit the customer's use by the optician's recommendations. When the order has been paid, it leaves right away electronically to the factory and the glasses are in production after twenty minutes. Paying before hand is new thing for many people, but with this action the stores are voiding huge credit losses.

Estimated delivery times are with single vision one to two weeks and with the multifocal glasses and the other factory products two to three weeks. Each pair of spectacles will be reviewed and placed in the supply condition in the store before the customer will be informed about the arrived glasses. Normally information goes with a text message. The customers are requested to reserve sufficient time

for the disposing of glasses. It takes little time to formulate glasses well to customer's head. Disposing the glasses is a crucial step in customer satisfaction.

Action in the store has been clarified and instructed to be as reasonable and profitable as possible. Every customer will be treated and serviced in a same way, told same facts about the pricing, manufacturing and product warranty etc.

The distribution channel means the way how a product or information of the product is delivered to an end customer. When exploring the suitable channel, there are two main options: horizontal channel and vertical channel.

Horizontal channel distribution

Horizontal marketing system means that two or more companies are connected to each other; so that they can combine their financial, production or marketing resources to accomplish more than any company could alone. Typical branches of horizontal channel include, for example, car and fast food (like MCDonald's) industry. (Kotler 2008, 886)

Specsavers Company is using horizontal channel of distribution only when ordering raw materials for example. Otherwise Specsavers have their own factors in UK, so horizontal channel is not used in foreign environment.

Vertical channel distribution

The other choice of distribution channel is called vertical channel. The producer, wholesaler or retailer can dominate the vertical channel; they are acting as a unified system. This means that one channel member owns the others; it has either contracts with the others or so much power that they must all cooperate. (Kotler 2008, 886)

When thinking about the distribution channel from the Specsavers' point of view, the more suitable is vertical channel. Specsavers products are manufactured in their own factory. At the moment they don't need help in manufacturing products. However, the horizontal channel is mainly used when products are complicated to make and require several manufacturing periods.

What comes to basic distribution, Specsavers stores are delivering their own products straight to the customer. To conclude: they sell the products → send the order to their own lens factory → get the ready-made product back to the store → deliver it direct to customer.

Franchising

It is a vertical marketing system as well, in which independent firms at different levels of production and distribution join together through contracts to obtain more economies or sales impact than they could achieve by their selves. (Kotler 2008, 887)

'The franchise organisation is the most common type of contractual relationship', according to Kotler (2008, 888)

Franchise is contractual association between manufacturers, wholesaler or service organisation (a franchiser) and independent businesspeople (franchisee) that are buying the right to own and operate one or more units in the franchise system, continues Kotler. (2008, 888) The franchiser traditionally provides a brand identity and start-up, marketing and accounting assistance, as well as management knowhow to franchisee. There are several benefits in franchising to both franchiser and franchisee.

Firstly, the franchiser secures the fast distribution for its products and services without incurring the full costs of setting up and running own operations. It also enables the franchiser a successful business more rapidly than by using own capi-

tal. Secondly, when franchisees are working for themselves, the franchiser gets very highly motivated management rather than a salary. This kind of relationship ensures that franchisees are operating under the franchisers' standards.

What comes to main advantages for the franchisee; they can start the business with limited capital and benefit from the experience of the franchiser. This way the cost and the risks are lower when starting a new business. Franchisees also get the benefits of centralised purchasing power etc. The most famous worldwide franchising companies are Specsavers and IKEA for example. Specsavers has their worldwide international concept and all stores need to operate carefully under this concept even for example in Finland almost all the stores are owned by private entrepreneurs. There are only few stores owned by the Specsavers chain. All national advertising and campaigns are from the chain and the privately owned stores need to support the campaign with the local advertising. The private entrepreneurs led stores cannot create their own campaigns, which are different than the national campaigns for example.

3.1.4 Marketing tools

Development of marketing is changing very fast and strongly. There are new ways and new tools of marketing coming all the time more. The one, who is going couple steps forward in marketing, is going couple steps forward in business also. Marketing is giving information and knowledge, but first of all benefits. People are buying benefits, not products.

The company needs to take into account how to reach their old customers as well as how to reach new customers from the chosen segments. There are several tools the company can use when trying to gather information about their existing customers as well as the new potential customers. The company needs to think that the old customers they have, are the most important customers. The renewal time of the eyeglasses is nowadays around two to three years. It is important that

the company is trying their best to reach their old customers to come back and buy more.

It has been explored that the old customer again recouping requires 1 unit, to get new customer's takes 8 units, old unsatisfied customer again recouping requires 27 units. The most important thing is to achieve and win the happy and satisfied customers. (Markkinoinnin kilpailukeinot 1995, 4)

The company needs to keep register about their old clients, know what they concretely are. What is going on in their life like how old they are, when did they buy from your store last time and so on. The register need to be updated pretty often. There is NPS (Net Promoter Score) system to help companies to update and so on thei customer register and reach all the old customer for example, I could recommend it for the Specsavers just from the basis I have read about it.

The company should do the plan how to utilize the customer register. All the customer information should be added to the program. For example, when the customer turns 45-years-old the letter will be automatically sent to the customers age 45 as an invitation to the free sight test for their drivers license. The police is requiring it, so it would be a good chance for the business, because at the same time they could sell (likely) the multifocal glasses to the potential target clients. At the same time the need for eyeglasses will be updated.

Same situation could be when the customer has bought eyeglasses or contact lenses, then after couple years the program will send some personal offer to the customer to attract her to come and buy again. This 'VIP' customer system could be working well. In addition, to get good offer or to get even something free makes people to come. The net promote score could also send the contact lens control invitations in every half year. Contact lens customer are easy to personalize, they are loyal to their opticians.

One good thing could be also that if the technique goes forward, there might be coming new frames from new producers, the program could sent some kind of in-

formation letter including some offers to the certain customers who has some kind of brand loyalty for example as well as if the customer has been thinking to buy multifocal eyeglasses for example but decides to return to the subject later, can the sales person record that information to the program and the invitation or kind of questionnaire can be sent to the customer after 'x' time. That can wake their interest again towards the company's products.

Many associations have for example "Tupperware invitations" or some other meetings like "the retired" or "entrepreneurs", so some seller or other one of the entrepreneurs can go and show the products suit just for them, tell about the products or show some frames or other solutions which could suit just for their purpose. For example in accounting agency they could need display multifocal glasses because they work all days on the computer. It is good to focus on some bigger associations which have lot of members. The company needs to network with the associations and give member of the board targeted information (read marketing).

I think that it would be very enthusiastic and motivating for personnel to have target profit set. The target profit should set to be realistic; otherwise the motivation of employees will die. Also the personal bonus could be motivating if it is OK with everyone. If it is not, it can cause competition situation between the salespersons. The personnel of Specsavers Opticians Seinäjoki don't have that personal bonus system, because they have not wanted it before. The other good thing would be the continuous education for the employees. It is motivating and refreshing change as well. It is always the company's benefit if the staff is educated and they are sure about what they are doing.

The personnel of the company are so called 'walking billboard'. It is important for them as well to remember that they are representing the company they are working for even out of the working hours. Internal communication is important. It is supposed to be clear and uncomplicated; like competitive sport type of coaching, get the work motivated and curious about what they are expected to do. It is important to have meeting every now and then with all the employers and employees

included. It is supposed to be at least once in a week. That is how everyone know all information needed.

The entrepreneur's job is to be active inspiration for their workers. They know their team is doing their job very well. Immediate feedback from the action is needed right away no matter is it positive or negative. That creates the knowhow and feeling of the success. Sometimes you need to remember thank the employees personally, the wage is not always the best and only way to thank people, positive feedback is needed sometimes right away after the success.

Creating a nice general appearance in the store, is affecting to the customer delight and enjoyment when making purchases. For example, in the Christmas time there could be Christmas decorations and in the summer time salespersons could have flower behind an ear and so on. This all is affecting on the store's atmosphere.

When, for instance, some big new contact lens campaign is about to begin, could couple sales persons go out from the store and have little stand there, for example in the mall where the Specsaver Seinäjoki's store is located. They could give some offers, explain the campaign so that it will be understood right and let people test and feel the contact lens materials and so on. I am sure it would bring the extra sales and good recognizability.

Specsavers Opticians Seinäjoki is using the Maze system for making a survey about the customer satisfaction; where they have succeeded and where is still room for improvement. Every time the customer come to sight test and is buying the glasses from the store, the little questionnaire will be sent to her the same day she was visiting in the store. After the customer comes to get her readymade glasses the second part of the questionnaire will be sent. I will put the questionnaire as an appendix of this final work.

3.1.5 Operating environment analysis

Seinäjoki is one of the fastest growing urban centres in Finland; the capital of the Southern Ostrobothnia province, the city is a thriving business and cultural centre. The population of Seinäjoki is 57 710 people. Seinäjoki offers all the advantages of a city as well as a friendly community atmosphere and comfortable living. The city is one of Finland's fastest growing urban areas, thanks partly to its favourable attitude towards entrepreneurs. In centre of Seinäjoki there are 24 000 jobs offered and over 3000 enterprises.

Seinäjoki's economic region has a population of about 140 000 people and the city is South Ostrobothnia's commercial centre. Seinäjoki is the migration positive municipality, which economic development has been positive. After the municipal mergers (Peräseinäjoki, Nurmo and Ylistaro) the central role in the province has been further strengthened. Measured among the general economic situation (depression/ recession) Seinäjoki and entire region has fared relatively well.

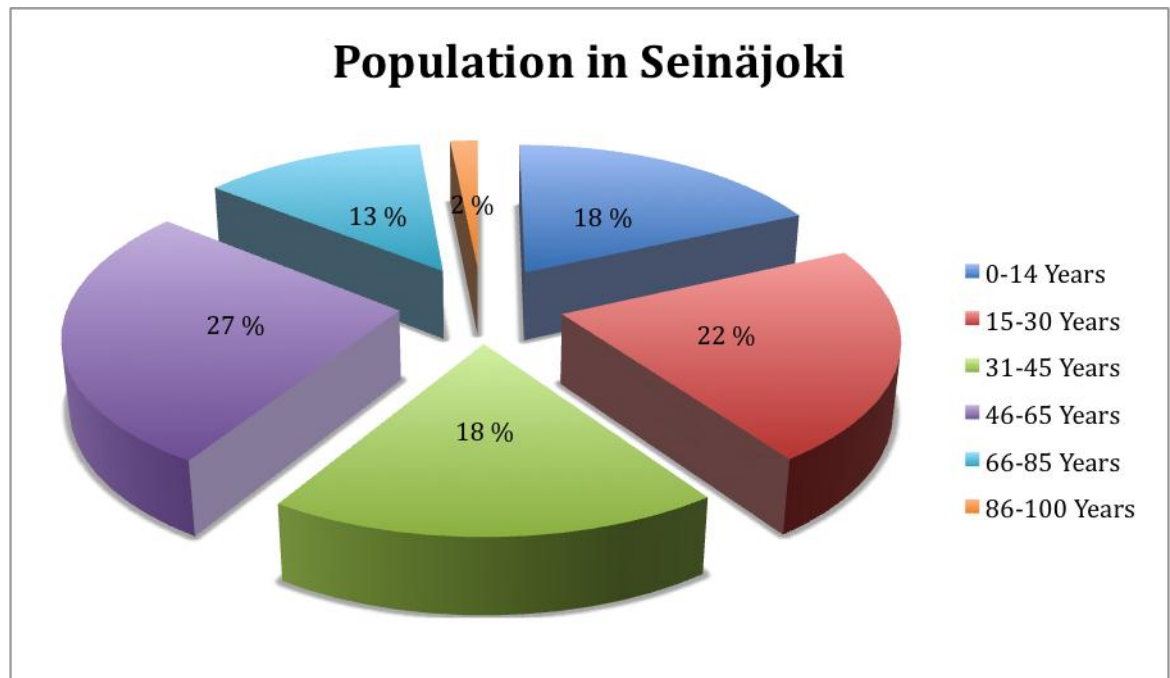


Figure 8: Population in Seinäjoki (31.10.2009)

During this 'so-called' crisis time, the economic part of operation is affecting the most. Other factors are as social-and technical factors. Social factors effects on consumer groups constitution and through that straight to company's customers. Social factors can be increased leisure time, consumption habits and population constitution for example. The things to consider as well are economic but political as well. Population is getting older so the average age is higher now than earlier. Consumers think old fashioned and like I told above, it is Specsavers' as well as the other companies in the field, duty to change. Incomes are not in the same level than before because of shortened working hours, even though the consumer's education level is higher than before, which enables better chance to get better job. To mention couple things about the political factors; general tax rates in Finland and EU directives what comes to the production and other operations.

In addition to the facts above social and cultural environments affecting variables are an aging population, a large number of older, increasing life expectancy, young people's increasing buying power, the youth market, ethic groups, multicultural societies, changing lifestyle and habits, social and cultural pressures towards the organization for example. One of the most important things is changing lifestyle and habits when it comes to Specsavers operations. It is a big challenge to get people think in a different way what they are used to.

And finally comes the technical factors. Technical developments can have significant and surprising effects. Development has been very fast during last few decades. The development has affected on communication development, data acceleration, the development of substituting products and production development. For example, development of the Internet generated opportunities in trade, distribution and marketing channels.

3.1.6 Customers needs, wants and demand

Human needs are states of felt deprivation. Needs are, including physical needs for food, clothing, warmth and safety; social needs for belonging and affection; and

individual needs for knowledge and self-expression. As Kotler (2008, 9) is putting it 'Marketers did not invent these needs; they evolved as a basic part of our human make-up. Maslow's Hierarchy of Need is describing human needs like:



Figure 9: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Abraham Maslow (1954) attempted to synthesize large body of research related to human motivation. Prior to Maslow, researches generally focused separately on such factors as biology, achievement or power to explain what energies directs and sustains human behaviour. Maslow posited a hierarchy of human needs based on two groups: deficiency needs and growing needs. Among the deficiency needs, each lower need must be met before moving to the next, higher level. (Wikipedia)

Behind all the marketing are people wants and desires. Normally people think that buying decisions are based on some rational reasons but the emotion goes always first. To make it clear, first comes desire for a particular product and only after that person makes rational reasoning to judge the purchase. (Rope 2005, 30)

Human wants are described as they were formed from human needs shaped by culture and individual personality. Wants are normally marketed by marketers in such a way that everyone feel these wants should be mandatory part of life. For example 'We all need food but want to eat different dishes to fulfil our hunger', (Kotler 2008, 9)

Demand is want backed by buying power, humans have unlimited wants, but resources are limited in the world. It's not possible that each human get the desired things in the world. Wants are kind of like wishes of human, buying power will convert these wants to demand. According to Kotler (2008, 9) People want to choose and demand the product that provides the most satisfaction for their money they are able to pay. (Kotler 2008, 9)

So as mentioned above, marketer's job is to create demand for their market offering. Demand is desirability, meaning that a consumer chooses a particular product to fulfil one's need. The functionality and quality are the main requirements for marketing, even though the more products have emotional appeal the more desirable people find it. To conclude, an average product can be selling better than an excellent product, because of the added image value and emotional appeal. (Rope 2005, 35)

When exploring needs, wants and demand of Specsavers products and services, it will be helping me to gather information about the creation of long-term relationship with the customers when making the Marketing Plan for Specsavers Seinäjoki. It will be learning experience to find out what information I should give to consumers and how to motivate consumers to buy from Specsavers instead of competitors.

Needs could be for example safety; belonging to an age group of 45-years-old or more and have a need for multifocal eyeglasses for a first time. It is a huge step for many people to realize and admit that near vision is so weak that you need to get multifocal eyeglasses for that. It is something you need that you can feel better and see better. Soon it is going to be noticed that living without them is impossible.

Wants, when using the same example, could be the type of eyeglass frame you are going to get or which kind of multifocal lenses getting to the glasses. There are different property lenses available with the different prices.

Offering affordable priced eye care services and products for consumers, creates demand for Specsavers' products. The quality is high and the price is low, materials and technique is exactly the same than what others are using, there is quality research made from that fact. This is competitive and successful more-for-more positioning by introducing a brand offering comparable quality but at a lower price. (Kotler 2008, 442)

Segmentation

The market is including many types of consumers, products and needs. Consumers can be divided into different segments by their similar needs, characteristics, behaviours, and interests for example. A market segment is a group of consumers responding the same way to a given set of marketing efforts. According to Kotler (2008, 156) 'It is impossible to make one product that is the first choice of consumers in all segments'. Company can focus on their efforts on meeting the domain needs of individual market segments; they can choose the group that is the most suitable and attractive for them at the time of being. (Kotler 2008, 156)

After defining the market segments the company can enter one or many of these segments. The company should target segments they can serve the best they can, profitably, generate the best customer value and keep them over time. Each target segments should feel that the product is designed right for them, who are the most valuable in segmentation. "The largest, fastest-growing segments are not always the most attractive one for every company.' (Kotler 2008, 157, 423)

In Specsaver store of Seinäjoki, the customer base is broad and the customers are from all social classes and they are coming around the whole province. According to Hanna Rautava, the other entrepreneur in Specsavers Seinäjoki and

Kauhava, who has been operating years in the field, the noteworthy fact is: there is a lot of customers (over 50-years-old men) who have not been dealing in the optical stores before, therefore they have been using “tiimari” glasses or other similar cheap plus-glasses from the normal grocery stores. In addition, elderly people, over 60-years-old, have been making purchases in Specsavers Opticians Seinäjoki’s store significantly more than what they have been doing in competitors’ stores.

Because of Specsavers Seinäjoki’s well-known and appreciated opticians the store has considerably more contact lens customers than any other Specsavers stores in Finland. The opticians as the entrepreneurs have strong experience with the contact lenses and after they started to run Specsavers Seinäjoki Opticians, their old customers followed them to the new store. Amount of multifocal customers is about 40% of Seinäjoki’s customers. That means over 45-years-old customers. This segment is very important, because the vast majority of sales come from this segment. The Specsavers Seinäjoki’s attention is that in their store there is lot of customers from Instrumentarium and former Tähti Optician’s chain. Also many clients followed the entrepreneurs from their old working place to this new place.

Specsavers have many different target groups. This is a field of business that needs to be shared carefully; there are a lot of potential consumers. In many cases the reason for dividing people to different segments is their age, gender, social glass and primary need. There are segments as; kids (about 0-14 years-old), teens (15→ years-old), young adults (← 30-years-old), adults (31-45 years old and up) for example. Basically the need drives people to optical stores; if they don’t see clearly anymore, they need help and Specsavers mission is to serve all people.

Segments can be divided also by trends; someone wants trendy new products with the strong colour and big size, the same time when someone wants very basic, invisible models. At Specsavers segments can be divided also by customer’s needs; if they have need for the single vision solution, or multifocal solution. Specsavers is trying to get in the marketing dominating position, and for sure try-

ing to capture 'multifocal-market' (over 45-years-old), like all others as well, that's where the best profit is coming from. Specsavers stores are making personal selling all the time by approaching different segments with the different campaigns directed to the target groups.

Also contact lenses have their own segment. Mostly they are people who are doing a lot of challenging sport, or just really want to avoid using eyeglasses. This group has great potential, because most of the time contact lenses are much-unknown subject at the market. For example when speaking about the sportsmen they are looking for an easy, sustainable solution so they can see well without thinking glasses falling off or steam up when sweating. Contact lenses are great solution for everyone.

As for the international markets, Specsavers is using the 'intermarket segmentation'; it is forming the segments of consumers who have similar need and buying behaviour even they are located in different countries. It is working very well with Specsavers; they are offering high-quality products with the low price, it is good method in every country, in addition the need is same everywhere even the style of the product was different. (Kotler 2008, 422)

To conclude, there are several so-called 'main' segments, to announce A. Segment could be kids; B. segment could be young adults, C. segment adults, D. multifocal users, E. elder people, F. trendy hunters, G. segment contact lens users and so on. Specsavers is offering something to everyone. The main and the most important segment for the Specsavers is segment D, multifocal users like mentioned before in this chapter. Among other groups, but still one of the most important is segment G, relatively the number of contact lens users in Finland is small compared to the other Scandinavian countries. Market share is still only 2% and Specsavers will have and keep the market dominant place in this section as well. These two groups are the base for the marketing plan.

CONTACT LENS USAGE IN THE NORDIC COUNTRIES

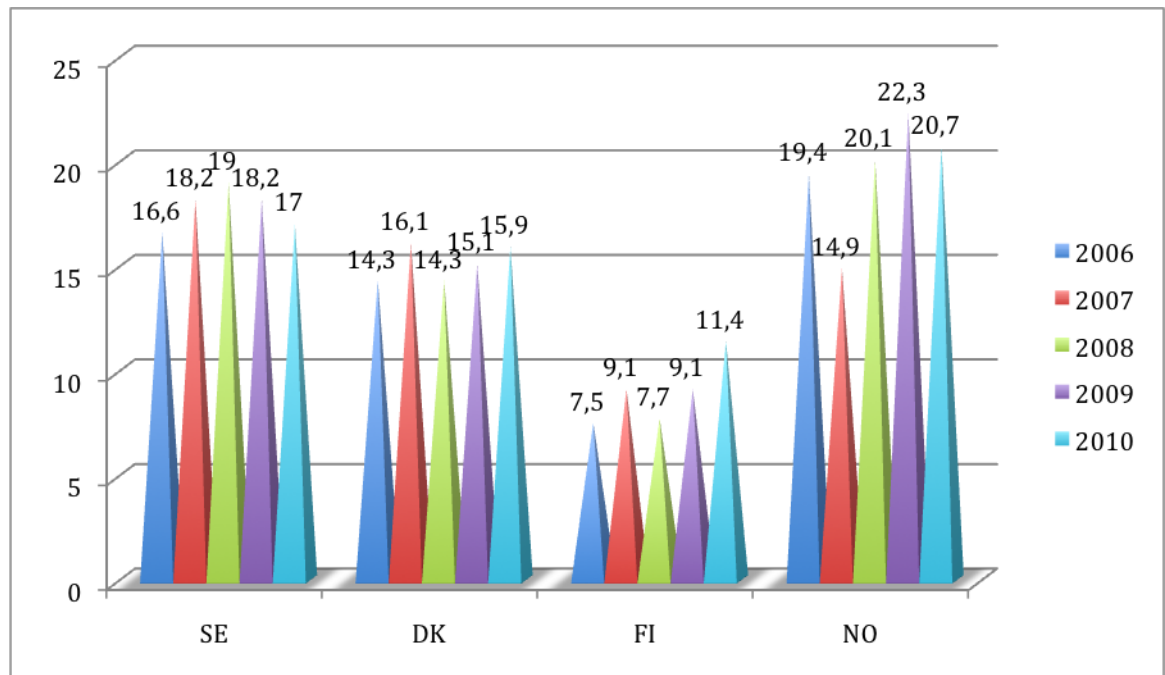


Figure 10: Contact lens usage in Nordic countries (From Ciba Vision 2010)

3.1.7 Competitors

Specsavers Opticians Seinäjoki was founded in September 2008. Sales took off and immediately started running fast. According to Specsavers Finland's calculations, Seinäjoki took right away during its first operating year 24% market share, while the whole industry's turnover was around 4, 8 million euros.

The strongest competitors in Seinäjoki are Instrumentarium and Silmäasema (2 stores). In addition, Nissen is also active in the city and three private optical stores. Specsavers Optikko Seinäjoki will hit on the Instrumentarium's and Silmäasema's strong positions, which is ophthalmologists concept and B to B trade. Also as known, the S-bonus system is strong in Southern Ostrobothnia, its value will be defeated by highlighting the idea of saving deal by Specsavers. Atleast Silmäasema is using the S-bonus system.

Specsavers's trump card is that they are offering same high quality products from famous producers with the lower price than the others. They have wide range of high-quality products, spectacles from different famous fashion houses.

3.2 Marketing strategy

'Specsavers- the best value opticians satisfying eye care need at affordable prices clearly, simply and consistently', is describing comprehensively the entirety.

Marketing strategy is the marketing logic by which the company hopes to create customer value and achieve profitable relationships. The company decides which customers it will serve (segmentation and targeting) and how (differentiation and positioning). It identifies the total market, divides it into smaller segments; select the most promising segments and focuses on serving and satisfying customers in these segments. (Kotler 2008, 156)

All companies know that they can't profitably serve all consumers in a given market, at least not in a same way. There are too many different type of consumers with too many different types of needs. Most companies need to divide up the total market, choose the best segments and design strategies for profitably serving chosen segments. This is so called 'customer-driven marketing strategy' and Specsavers Company is trying to serve something to everyone, with the best possible ways.

The market consists of many types of customers, products and needs. The marketer has to determine which segments offer the best opportunities. Consumers can be grouped and served in various ways based on geographic, demographic, psychographic and behavioural factors. There is more information about the segmentation in chapter 3.1.3, page 55.

After the company has defined market segments, it can enter one or many of these segments. Marketing target involves evaluating each market segment's attrac-

tiveness and selecting one or more segments to enter. A company should target segments in which it can profitably generate the greatest customer value and sustain it over time. Specsavers two most important target groups are the multifocal users (over 45-years-old people) and contact lens market. Multifocal market, because that is where the euros are coming from for the company and Specsavers aim is to be the biggest contact lens deliverer in Finland. The potential in this market is huge. More about the target groups of Specsavers is coming on chapter 6.4.

After the company has decided which market segments to enter, it must decide how it will differentiate its market offering for each targeted segment and what positions it wants to occupy in those segments. Positioning is arranging for a product to occupy a clear, distinctive and desirable place relative to competing products in the minds of target consumers. According to one famous positioning expert positioning is “how you differentiate your product or company- why a shopper will pay a little more for your brand.” (Kotler 2008, 157) Marketers plan is to distinguish their products from competing brands and give them the greatest advantage in their target markets.

What comes to positioning the products, the company first identifies possible customer value differences that provide competitive advantages upon which to build the position. The company can either offer the greater customer value by charging lower prices than the competitors or by offering more benefits to justify higher prices. Specsavers is offering same quality products with even 25% lower prices. Effective positioning begins with differentiation, actually differentiating the company’s market offering so that it gives consumers more value. When the company has chosen the desired position, it must take strong steps to deliver and communicate that position to target consumers. (Kotler 2008, 157)

In the chapter 3.1.4 you can find more information about the Specsavers Opticians Seinäjoki’s positioning. Marketing process is going according to the Specsavers Company everywhere and it is implemented at the national level, mainly by the chain. In addition, the Specsavers Opticians Seinäjoki is doing its own regional marketing further by using a local advertising agency and the local media; news-

papers, billboards, taxi advertising, shopping centre advertising etc. In marketing, the company is utilizing the entrepreneurs as well as Specsavers' created strong awareness of marketing in the region and they lean on the good service and customers pleasant treatment brought reputation.

The whole Specsavers chain's strategy based on the 'customer first'-service and 24-1-pricing system. The marketing group is bringing it to the public marketing in Finland (and elsewhere) more than ever now. That's the basic idea of this business, unique way of pricing. To be honest, competitors have been taken this same way of marketing and pricing now; kind of plagiarism. They are in a red 'alarm mode'; they know they have to do something. Even they try they can't afford the same benefits with the Specsavers. The buying volume is much more than what they can offer.

Specsavers Opticians Seinäjoki's strategy is based on profitable growth. Profitable growth strategy's key element is increasing amount of customers and sales. Growth will be sought out with raising credibility and awareness, good service, expertise and strong regional marketing tool as well as the new ventures.

What comes to Specsavers Opticians Seinäjoki's HR strategy; it bases on passion, internal entrepreneurship, curiosity, knowledge, and motivation, training and coaching.

3.3 Objectives

After exploring the company's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats the next step is to set objectives. The objectives are goals that the company would like to attain during the plan's term. For example Specsavers Opticians Seinäjoki's goal could be to increase their turnover with 100 000 euro annually. If the turnover was 1.2 million euro in year 2009, it is supposed to be 1.3 million euro in 2010. The question is, how to reach this goal and where to get those extra sales? For example: from competition, by increasing usage rate, by adding and so on.

Specsavers Opticians Seinäjoki goal is to achieve market leadership in the region and maintain its status. Business must be financially prudent. Revenue target for year 2012 is 1.5 million euro.

Specsavers have couple of common objectives. Those are based on the company values (chapter 2.3.1, page 17). The basic idea is to sell as many eyeglasses as possible with low price through customer satisfaction. The main thing is not selling itself it is the whole service. The Mission Statement: Specsavers- the best value opticians satisfying eye care needs at affordable prices clearly, simply and consistently, is describing comprehensively the entity. Strengthening the brand is one of the basic objectives what comes to whole chain. The pricing system 2 for 1 is the basic marketing tool and kind of campaign they will always have. The company's objective is to offer the best value for the money and service will be similar no matter in which Specsavers you are going.

Long-term and maybe the most challenging objectives is to make eyeglasses more as an accessory that people can buy just for fun. Not only because they have to. With prices of Specsavers it is possible. The other important goal is to get leadership in contact lens market, in Finland and whole Scandinavia. The good thing is that Specsavers Opticians Seinäjoki have the regional leadership already, the aim is to keep the position. Also trying to make old customers coming back to the store for the new sight test and buy eyeglasses as well as reach as many new customers as possible. Specsavers Seinäjoki has very good preconditions to maintain their position as a market leader in this Southern Ostrobothnia region. The customer service is brilliant in this store, with this fact they have got so many competitors' customers to be their customers. Their buying volume is great, even the average price has got lower that only means that they need to sell more. The quality of customer service is the best weapon in this war. With customer service can be double the cash flow; you can double the amount of closed sails from incoming customers and also double the amount of the sales with each customers. For example, as a good service person you can help the customer to buy not only eyeglasses, but also for instance contact lenses, which is great extra selling.

When studying and exploring the optical market and the basic information about this company I have planned couple objectives for the future. I will shortly explain them with the following figures:

AGENDA 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing business supporting and strengthening • Maintain achieved market leadership in the region and increase the difference to the competitors • Increase the recognisability and credibility • Preservation and improvement of operating profit • Increase the number of customers and sales 				
OBJEC- TIVES 2010- 2012		2009	2010	2011	2012
	Turno- ver	1.2 ME	1.3 ME	1.4 ME	1.5 ME
	Eye- glasses	ca.1.1ME	ca.1.2ME	ca.1.3ME	ca.1.4ME
	Contact lenses	34 000 €	70 000 €	110000 €	150000€
	Stuff	2 opticians, 3 sellers	2 opticians, 3 sellers	2 opticians, 3.5 sellers	3 opticians, 3.5 sellers

Figure 11: Objectives for the year 2011-2012

<p>OPERATIONS 2011-2012</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start and develop the ophthalmologists operations • Increasing the number of contact lens customers and sales • Contact the businesses for opening the BtoB-trade • Strong local marketing in addition to chain marketing • The strategy, vision, goals and plans presentation for the stuff wisely • Sales strategy- and tools development • Each staff member will be trained and refined to be a “key-players”
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Figure 12: Operations for the year 2011-2012

When thinking about the marketing tools in chapter 3.1.4, there is good points that could be utilize in this ‘objectives’ chapter as well. Good concrete ideas for the campaigns and reaching new and also old customers.

Along these objectives the company can reach new customers, what enables the increase of the annual turnover. I think that the main objective should be the focusing in advertising and other operations on the two main target groups. That is where the euros are coming from. For example, if you buy two for one pair of multifocal eyeglasses, you can get eye test for free, I am sure it would attract middle age and old people in this Southern Ostrobothnia region to the Specsavers store. It is generally known that people in this region are skimpy, so if they can get even something free, I am sure they will come to the store. The eye test have good coverage for the company, but when the entrepreneurs are working as an opticians, I

think it would be profitable, if that is how the multifocal glasses would get sold more. When it comes to contact lens users, the company could offer them for example three months with the price of two months lenses. People who are using the contact lenses every day would definitely come to buy. If the company would use for example the Net Promotion Score, they could send the invitation for all their contact lens customers about the offer and in the same message ask them to come to their half-year contact lens control (30€).

After all, the main objective is the customer satisfaction and delight. When the company is achieving this, it is guaranteed that the sales will go up, which means that the turnover and profitable are increasing.

3.4 Defining the target groups

As told in a chapter 3.1.3 page 55, Specsavers is serving all the potential consumers but concentrates on certain core groups. Like told earlier chapter, I will concentrate in this chapter to segments D as multifocal clients (over 45-years-old) and G as contact lens customers. These two groups are very important for the business and what comes to achieving the settled objectives.

Marketing and sales work should primarily be targeted for the most potential buyers, which are in this work people who have need for multifocal lenses. In most of the cases these potential customers do not know how to parse their need. They are coming to buy only classes for reading because they have noticed that they need help with it, but after making the sight test with optician they may notice that they have a need for not only reading but also when looking far distance. That is clear need for multifocal glasses. When these customers are entering to the store, the salesperson can right away define in her mind in which potential group the customer is belonging by her age or existing need. Also when consumers need to make sight test for the police at the age at 45, it is potential moment for the company to make business with them; the most potential target group, where the eu-

ros where the biggest profit is coming from. (Optician and Entrepreneur Anssi Kivistö)

‘Contact lenses are fitting for every single one’, says the entrepreneur of Specsavers Opticians Seinäjoki Anssi Kivistö. He has been dealing with the contact lenses many years. He is even famous in Finland about his professionalism with the contact lenses. There are only one or two illnesses in the world, which are making the contact lens using impossible, notes optician and entrepreneur Kivistö. To mention a couple of the most potential contact lens user groups are for example sportsmen, middle-aged ladies and people with the very high power lenses. Firstly, when doing sports eyeglasses are quite difficult to use; when sweating the lenses are getting foggy for instance. There is also a risk to loose or break them. Secondly, the middle-age ladies want to change the way they look. Using contact lenses is good way to renew their looks. There is also possibility to order contact lenses with different colours. It is good inspiration for people to get new trendy look. It is a huge benefit for people to get to see without glasses, it is comfortable. Also the people with high power – or + who need to use glasses all the time are a very potential customer group. Most of them have not ever known that there is a possibility to live without glasses on their face. Buying those strong eyeglasses is quite expensive, at least if the power is changing often. Using contact lenses is relatively cheaper, easier and more comfortable for them. There are many different contact lenses: multifocal, single vision, day-and night, one-day solutions etc.

3.5 Budgeting

Budgeting is divided into a two different parts as chain nationwide marketing and the company’s own local marketing. The chain has defined the nationwide marketing budget to be a certain per cent ‘x’ from the turnover, which the company need to pay for the chain.

The company’s entrepreneurs are putting their own money for the local marketing whatever is needed. The own capital invested in marketing should come as quickly

as possible back to the same level, rather more than invested to be profitable. Normally it is short periods marketing and bounded for the different and changed campaigns. When it comes to sponsoring and image marketing, which is kind of long-term marketing, it is slowly productive and difficult to measure. It should not get focused on.

One good aspect for this is also personnel's customer service and sales skills development. It should be budgeted as a part of wage costs or turnover.

The entrepreneurs should set the budget to achieve the objectives they have made. For example, all campaigns are known beforehand so they could adjust their budget beforehand for the following year among the goals. Of course, there have to be always little extra counted for the budget, there will be surprises during the year. Now end of the year 2010, the budget should get done for the year 2011-2012.

3.6 Planning the marketing operations

The importance of own made marketing plan and implementing the own plan and follow it strongly is the key point of success.

I told earlier about the NPS (Net Promotion Score) system and with utilizing that the Specsavers Company could be even more successful in marketing. Specsavers Opticians Seinäjoki as well as the whole Specsavers Company has put the great value for the customer satisfaction in their action. Using the Net Promotion Score would help them to collect the results from the customers visiting in their stores. It could be working well with the Maze program they are using now.

The best and the most suitable promotion tools for Specsavers marketing planning are advertising and personal selling. The Specsavers Company is operating at the moment with huge resources worldwide. Advertising is the way to get people to come to the store and rest is all about the personal sales work. First of all, the per-

sonnel need to be aware of the existing campaigns all the time. It cannot happen that customer comes after some interesting and good offer and then the sales person does not know about the offer.

In marketing it is important to generate repetitions of different medias, for example the chain's tv-marketing should be confirmed in local newspaper marketing at the same time. Other eligible implementation plan could be for example to give gift vouchers to new high school graduates in the spring. With the gift voucher they could for example get 20% discount of the new frames. At the same time it could be announced in local newspapers that Specsavers Seinäjoki is giving congratulating the students and give present for them to their store. The voucher should not be personal; students could give it to someone else as well if they don't need it. The idea is that the marketing is effective targeted to the new students and their families and friends.

One effective marketing way is so called integrated network marketing. The best is the win-win-win triangle marketing, says marketing consult lawyer Jarmo Vuori from Ylöjärvi. For example Specsaver Seinäjoki gives the VIP-discount card for some sport association and makes them to give it forward for their members, supporters and their friends. With card the buyer of the store can get certain amount discount from glasses or contact lenses and every returned VIP-discount card the sport association will get certain amount of money. The meaning of this is that the interest of the sport-club is continuing to deliver the VIP-cards. For this win-win-win marketing are suitable for example organizations and different channels. If the segment is for example ladies, the organization could be some mode clothing store or hairdresser. (Markkinoinnin kilpailukeinot 1995, 4)

Marketing has two main 'so called' target groups; buying customers and the company's own personnel. When organizing the marketing, it is primarily needed to tell to company's own personnel what they need to know about the existing campaign, what is requested, what is the objective and what is required from the personnel's action. This is the responsibility of the entrepreneurs. They need to deliv-

er their knowledge and information to their employees. What can be more embarrassing than that customers know about the campaigns more than the personnel?

When chosen the marketing tool, need to be considered of how achieve the personal contact. For instance the association of Seinäjoen Yrittäjät, the company can give them their concrete offer just for their members together in their member mail. Normally this costs only normal post costs for the association. This opens a little bit the B to B marketing possibilities for the Specsavers Seinäjoki; in addition it increases recognizability among the entrepreneurs of Seinäjoki.

3.7 Operation's responsibilities, implementers and scheduling

What comes to responsibilities, implementers and scheduling of operations, is important to have clear and simple vision how things are wanted to do. All parties need to be aware of the plan and its implementation.

Responsibility need to get divided into a smart way because of saving time and money. Because of this fact Specsavers Opticians Seinäjoki is using local marketing agency to help them with the advertising. It is always smart to use professionals to avoid spending too much time and money if they are asking acceptable price. Outsourcing the marketing to the marketing agency is good way, but they are not totally aware of the chain's marketing plan and aims, so they can't do it alone. That's why normally Anssi Kivistö and Hanna Rautava are planning the clear message used in the advertising with the marketing agency used.

Every operation the company is doing need to have the person whose responsible is to take care of the whole operation: the schedule, result and that the result will be followed carefully. The responsibility can be only on one person. The person can delegate the duties need to be done, but the person need to carry out the whole operation and make sure everything is done like it should be done. It is easy to delegate things, but it is more difficult to take responsibility.

What comes to implementers of the operations the marketing agency can be classified to be one of them like described above.

Every marketing campaign, theme or part needs to have own profit objective made beforehand. There also need to be plan how to follow-up these results for example after the newspapers advertisement can be followed-up the cash flow; how many people more have visited the store than before the advertisement, can you clearly see the difference? Specsavers Seinäjoki has the hit counter they can follow and mark up the people stepping in their store. It is good way to keep a record of the people visited their store compared to profit made.

The personnel's educations is affecting also to the profit, even it is not always taking on account. It could be also followed-up what the difference is after the personnel education; how much the sales is increasing per visitor after the education the personnel. It could be a good point for the Specsavers Opticians Seinäjoki as well. Always when done the investment for the marketing, one should be thinking how to measure the result. It is not always money; it can be also the useful contacts or cash flow.

The schedule should be always made beforehand for the whole year with the suitable dispersion, so that there will not be long 'quiet' periods in between. The season schedule could be done quarterly adding different marketing tasks together, for example that there is not two campaigns overlap. There should also be the optional operations for the existing campaign.

Good way to follow-up and develop the company's operations and plans is to interact with the colleagues from the other stores to see what action is working well in their store or what is done with the bad success.

To conclude, good follow-up systems are: system, which is calculating the amount of visitors in the store, customer satisfaction- survey, as a separate questionnaire sent with the postor email or questions asked when closing the purchase: 'what af-

affected to your decision to choose our store', also the offers and other advertising in local media, are they affecting to the amount of customers and so on.

In all marketing must be ready to try different and new things what competitors have not invent yet and at the same time must be aware of if the new way of campaigning is not working well, need to be ready to chance the operating methods.

Must be daring to make bold and different marketing things what others don't have yet, says Jarmo Vuori.

4 CONCLUSION

Marketing is the whole basis of the company's existence. The competition is hard and strong in this sector of business. The company needs to be aware all the time what is going on in their competitor's minds. The harder the competitive situation is, the faster are the movements need to be done up- and down.

There is the huge difference in advertising and huge amount of advertising on field of this market. The company needs to be very ingenious to make positive but different awakening on the market. As totality, it is important that the company is creating by its marketing credibility and reliable picture of itself and its own action. The trend today is that the company and the customer are in a partnership with each other's. It is important that the customer feel that the company by its action is trying to help her. The company means all the workers and products and services included.

It is good to remember that if you do something, do it fully, loud and optimally, always better than the others. The importance is to exceed yourself and expectations to put one every single day.

First of all, it was natural to do the final thesis alone, since the topic was interesting for both the company and me. I have been working for this company almost one year now. However, when proceeding, I noticed that it was a challenging task to do. It was hard to organize my thoughts and conclusions, so that everything would be logical.

There were two main goals: to create the marketing plan for the Specsavers Opticians Seinäjoki and explore the market so that it would be easy to bring up some developing ideas. The biggest challenge was to combine between these two goals, so that they wouldn't become two totally separate sections.

Finding information of optical market globally and domestically was partly challenging. However, mainly Internet acquired the main part of the information for the

thesis through other channels. While searching, I found plenty of general information, but finding exact statistics from reliable sources was not totally simple.

I found exploring cultural theories and marketing communication principles very interesting. There was plenty of information available, which made it hard to limit what was actually relevant information for my thesis.

There was also another challenge in this work: how to bring cultural forces along in marketing plan, how to utilize the global concept and so on. I made a conclusion that cultural elements had to be taken into account in promotion planning and marketing plan.

The study about the company's different business aspects became quite comprehensive and it worked well as a basis for designing the marketing plan and creating the marketing plan. The different elements in foreign environment affecting the marketing plan were mainly explained in order to give direction for the company how to consider different factors. Anyhow, there is additionally some practical information how these elements function in Finnish and especially in the local market here in Southern Otrbothnia.

The product implementation plan in foreign market was designed to give ideas how the company's market offering can be expanded into different levels. The pricing policies for international markets were mainly to give guidelines.

When making this final work, there were several objectives to achieve. I think that I have explored the market very carefully and learned a lot when studying this case. I think that this work will help the company Specsavers Opticians Seinäjoki to find and focus on these main target segments as well as making and creating new successful campaigns locally to support the chains marketing. I also feel that this work opened many new aspects to explore and see the potential market and how to approach the potential customers even better than before. I found great motivation to my own work effort while doing this work. I think I can now motivate and

inspire my co-workers as well. After all, I am satisfied with the results and ideas gathered to this work.



Figure 13: Logo of Specsavers

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Appendices

1. Theme questionnaire questions for the entrepreneurs
2. 241-Pricing in Finland
3. Specsavers logo
4. Customer satisfaction summary
5. Customer feedback questionnaire before getting the ready-made glasses
6. Customer feedback questionnaire after getting the ready-made glasses

APPENDIX 1: Theme questionnaire questions for the entrepreneurs of Specsavers Seinäjoki and Kauhava.

1. What you expect from my final thesis?
2. Could you tell me little bit about the basic information and history of Specsavers Seinäjoki? What made you two quit in your last working place and start to run this new business?
3. Could you tell me about the Specsavers business idea and what are the facts you put the value for and why?
4. Which is the market, Specsavers Seinäjoki should try to stick in even more?
5. About the HRM, how do you choose your personnel? What are the characteristics needed to get in your team?
6. Economic situation of Specsavers Seinäjoki?
7. The main objectives for the future?
8. What is your weapon against the competitors, which are your strengteness? What about weaknesses?
9. What kind of meaning is a personal sales work for your company?
10. What kind of motivating methods are you using?
11. How are you developing your marketing organization?
12. What kind of marketing tools are you using?
13. How are you planning your budget?

APPENDIX 2: 241 Pricing in Finland

KAHDET SILMÄLASIT YKSIEN HINNALLA

TOMMY HILFINGER OSTRIS Red or Dead Ben Sherman JASPER CONRAN fcuK BENCH. MISSONI QUICKSILVER Austin Reed

2 X YKSITEHOT NYT ALK.

59€

2 X MONITEHOT NYT ALK.

149€



SPECSAVERSILLA SAAT AINA KAHDET SILMÄLASIT YKSIEN HINNALLA.

Nyt saat kampanjamme ajan **kahdet silmälasit yksien hinnalla alkaen 59€ sisältäen PENTAX - vakioyksiteholinssit** (Norm. alkaen 79€), kun valitset toisen parin samasta tai alemmasta hintaluokasta.

Moniteholinsseillä kaksien lasien hinta alkaen vain 149€ ja voit valita kaupan päälle toiset kehykset vakiomoniteholinsseillä samasta tai alemmasta hintaluokasta!

Nyt voit siis valita toiset silmälasit työhön, toiset harrastuksiin tai vapaa-aikaan!

Tervetuloa sovittelemaan laseja liikkeeseemme! Voit kokeilla kehyksiä myös omiin kasvoihisi [tästä linkistä!](#)

Kampanja on voimassa 31.12.2010 asti kaikissa Specsavers Optikko -liikkeissä. Ei voi yhdistää muihin tarjouksiin. Muut linssit ja lisäominaisuudet hinnaston mukaisesti.

APPENDIX 3: Specsavers logo



APPENDIX 4: Customer Satisfaction summary

